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AN
A P O L O G Y
FOR THE
L I F E
OF
GEORGE ANNE BELLAMY.

APOLLO

LIBRARY



AN
A P O L O G Y
FOR THE
L I F E
OF
GEORGE ANNE BELLAMY,
LATE OF COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

To which is annexed,
Her original Letter to JOHN CALCRAFT, Esq.
advertised to be published in October 1767,
but which was then violently suppressed.

“ The Web of our Life is of a mingled Yarn, Good and Ill
“ together; our Virtues would be proud, if our Faults whipt
“ them not; and our Crimes would despair, if they were not
“ cherished by our Virtues.”

All's Well that Ends Well, Act 4, Scene iii.

THE THIRD EDITION.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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A B O L O N T Y

1847

I I H H

GEORGE ANNE WILLIAMS

WIFE OF GEORGE ANNE WILLIAMS

WITNESSES

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A N
A P O L O G Y
F O R T H E
L I F E
O F
GEORGE ANNE BELLAMY.

L E T T E R XXIX.

May 16, 17—.

THE moment I was informed of Mr. Quin's return to town, I waited on him to apologize for the unpardonable neglect I had been guilty of in leaving England without paying my respects to him. I found at his apartments Sir George (since Lord) Lytton, Thomson, Mallet, and Smollett. As I had been already introduced to those gentlemen, and was upon a footing of intimacy with them, I was not sorry at their being present upon the occasion. Having saluted him, I assured him that I was happy in the opportunity of clearing myself of the error I had committed, before his friends, who had honoured me with their notice upon his account. I acknowledged that appearances were against me; yet, though they were

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but appearances, I dreaded his censure for them, more than that of the whole world. I conjured him at the same time, to acquit me of the sin of ingratitude, which, though he may have judged me guilty of it, my heart was utterly incapable of.

Whether sincerity spoke in my eyes, and pleaded my cause for me, I cannot say; but he immediately gave me a kiss of reconciliation; saying, after he had done so, “My dear girl, I was hurt at your contempt and inattention, as I sincerely *had* your welfare at heart.” Notwithstanding this seeming cordiality gave me pleasure, the word *had*, on which he laid an emphasis, alarmed my fears, and prevented my being so happy as I should otherwise have been. The gentlemen in company were all glad to see me, especially Thomson, who enquired for his relation and my friend, Mrs. Jackson. But I could give him no information, as she had retired into the country, and all my attempts to find her out had been ineffectual. Mr. Quin advised me to make my appearance in Belvidera. And as I had not a doubt of succeeding in any character I undertook, it was equal to me what was fixed on.

Upon our settling in lodgings, Miss O'Hara, Lord Tyrawley's eldest daughter, who by some means or other had disoblged his Lordship, came to live with us. This circumstance was very agreeable to me, as well as to my mother.

ther. She in particular was pleased with it. For as she was now entirely engrossed by her meditations, which were usually employed on two different subjects, namely her favourite Mr. Crump, and the approach of a more agreeable figure called *death*, she was glad I had a companion in whose friendship she could rely, and who would forward her wish; that of uniting me to Mr. Crump. One day my mother being more than usually importunate on this subject, I was so displeased at the odious topic, that I answered with great warmth, "I wish, Madam, you would marry him yourself. I can have no objection to him for a *father-in-law*; but have a most insuperable one to him for a *husband*." My asperity seemed to grieve my mother much more than it had ever done before. A few months, however, declared her motives, and made her unhappy the rest of her days.

Mrs. Woffington played the first night with her usual *eclat*, in the character proposed. Mrs. Ward soon followed. Her beautiful face and novelty insured her applause at her first appearance. But her situation, as well as her figure, being against her, she did not conclude the part of Cordelia, with any degree of credit. Mr. Garrick stood unrivalled in Lear, but as Mrs. Ward's acting did not tend much to the support of the piece, it was not repeated. The great veter-

ran Quin had not made any of Shakspeare's characters his study, except that of Falstaff, in which he was inimitable, and that of Henry the Eighth, in which he likewise excelled.

Though Mr. Quin appeared to be reconciled to me, I found, to my sorrow, that he did not treat me with that conspicuous tenderness and regard he had formerly shewn me. His behaviour to me then, as I have already observed, was more like that of a fond father towards his darling child, than of a mere well-wisher. I was now invited but seldom to those envied parties, which at once flattered my vanity, and enlightened my understanding. And although I had at this time many more admirers, he discontinued to favour me with his advice and cordial regard.

Notwithstanding a timid apprehensive modesty is commendable in the younger part of the fair sex, yet this amiable virtue might be carried to a detrimental extreme. A consciousness of rectitude, even where appearances are greatly against them, will support the innocent under the most discouraging censures; and not only support under them, but stimulate to a due exertion of every means in their power, towards their vindication.—Bold in the purity of my intentions, and conscious that I had not offended, even in thought, against the sacred laws of chastity,
though

though carried off by the contrivance of an avowed admirer, I should have contemned the sneers of the prude, the exultations of the coquette, the pity of the seeming *virtuous*, and the censures of the whole world. By so doing I should, probably, have soon been able to vindicate my conduct to my friends, and have recovered the character I had so undeservedly lost.—As the noxious dews of the night, are exhaled by the earliest rays of the sun, so would the scandal with which I was loaded have been quickly dispersed by the discriminating beams of truth. But, unhappily, a false delicacy prompted me to fly from, instead of repelling, the casual attack; and by it, among other inconveniences and misfortunes, I lost the favour and affection of this worthiest of men.

At length I was soon announced to bring up the rear of our theatrical forces in the character of Belvidera. When, to my great surprize, instead of the crowded house I had flattered myself with playing to, it was far from full. This was the more mortifying, as it was unexpected. My own reception, indeed, was as warm as it had ever been; but still I was dissatisfied. At the conclusion of the piece, however, Mr. Town, whom I have already taken notice of, hearing another piece given out for the following evening, cried out, “The same! the same!” The audience joined, as usual, in the cry:

and by this eventual stroke, the same play, "Venice Preserved," was performed, for four successive nights, to crowded houses; and continued one of our most drawing performances to the conclusion of the season.

At this period it was customary to play "Tamarlane" on the fourth of November. That day drew near; and neither Mrs. Woffington nor myself had been spoken to, relative to it. We were the more surprised at this silence, as Mr. Quin was reputed to be the best Bajazet that ever trod the stage. One evening, before the piece then performing was concluded, he sent to the green-room, desiring to speak with me in his dressing-room. I immediately rose from my seat, and went to the door; but hearing voices within, I stopped for some time, lest I should interrupt business, or be one too many. As I stood, I distinctly heard The Fox say (for Volpone was then exhibiting) "Why, my Lord, we have Woffington at the receipt of custom, and who bids more!—Ward, flatter than a half-baked pan-cake—and little Bellamy as cold as ice, and as conceited as the devil."

Having heard this fine eulogium, I waited till the laugh, which was partly at my expense, had subsided, and then made my appearance. I found, on my entrance, Lord Orford, and Thomson, who constantly attended his friend Quin, and who had brought

brought Shenstone, so much admired for his pastorals, to make his bow. As soon as Mr. Quin saw me, he thus accosted me: "My dear girl, I have a favour to beg of you, and desire you will not deny me." I instantly replied, "You can make but *one* request, Mr. Quin, relative to the theatre, which I can refuse you; and I beg you will not give me so sensible a pain, as that of not being able to acquiesce in *every* request of yours." He returned, with a frown, "It is what you point at, and you had better comply with a good grace, for you *shall* and *must* do it."

This threat, as my disposition is not framed to bear compulsion, nettled me so much, that, with the air of queen Catherine, I said, "I revere you, sir, as a father, and esteem you as a friend; but if your request relates to Tamarlane, I must tell you, *that little Bellamy has too much conceit to play Selima to such a half-baked pan-cake as Ward.*" My assumed consequence so highly diverted the company, that good humour was immediately restored; and they joined in telling Quin, that, in order to have so amiable and spirited a daughter, he must comply with my wishes, and take the beautiful Woffington to wife. Mr. Quin was so pleased at this well-timed retort, wherein I retaliated with such promptitude his severe description; and he was at the same time so charmed with my spirit,

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having

having hitherto thought me too placid; that he restored me, from that moment, to his favour and I presided the same night at supper, as usual.

When I found myself perfectly re-established in Mr. Quin's favour, I enquired of him the reason he had treated me with so much coolness, after he had assured me of his being reconciled to me, and was well convinced of my innocence and sincerity? He informed me, that my indiscretion in leaving a London theatre, after I had received so many marks of peculiar distinction from the public, deserved the severest reprobation. He added, that whoever had been my adviser upon the occasion was not my friend. As I had every reason to conclude myself the favourite child of the public, he said, they would certainly have cherished me; and it was treating them, as well as myself and him, ill, to desert them. That I could not avoid observing the difference of my present situation, and it would be a considerable time before I recovered the height from which I had fallen. That he felt the disappointment far more than I did, as he had set his heart upon my rivalling the women at the other house.

All the company present appeared to be of the same opinion. And as Mr. Quin's observations seemed to carry conviction with them, I perceived that I had been very imprudent

prudent in taking such a step without his assent. I went home, more oppressed by his friendship than I had been unhappy through his displeasure. And I from that moment formed a resolution to atone for my past indiscretion, by applying, with unremitted ardour, to the duties of my profession, and to consult my newly-recovered monitor, upon every concern of the least importance.

G. A. B.

LETTER XXX.

May 22, 17—.

THE next character I appeared in was that of Athenais, in "Theodosius." I had no sooner come upon the stage, on the night of its performance, than the first object that presented itself to my view was Lord Byron, who had placed himself in the stage-box. The tremor I was thrown into, by seeing a person so near who had been the cause of so much disquietude to me, entirely deprived me of all my powers, and I stood for some time motionless. Mr. Rich and his family, observing from their box that I suddenly turned pale, which was easily discernible from my complexion being usually too florid, he came immediately behind the scenes to enquire the reason of it. His Lordship had by this time quitted his seat, and placed

himself against one of the side scenes, in sight of the audience. Mr. Rich, having let himself in by a private door from the box passage, of which he always had a key, found his Lordship in this situation, and was no longer at a loss to account for my trepidation.

As Lord Byron knew that our proprietor had in his youthful days been a man of gallantry, he accosted him with an assured look, and said, "Well, Rich; I am come to take away your Athenias!" Such a salutation could not fail to give offence to a person who had always treated me as a daughter, and who possessed no little share of personal courage, united with an humane disposition. He accordingly reproved his Lordship, for avowing a design of so unjustifiable a nature, so inconsistent with humanity and the laws of society, and consequently so much beneath the dignity of a peer. He at the same time remonstrated with his Lordship on the cruelty of coming to alarm a young person, who had never given him any room to suppose she approved of his passion, and who could not but be apprehensive from his Lordship's present conduct. Mr. Rich then said, in a resolute tone, "I desire, my Lord, that you will quit the scenes, for I cannot stand tamely by, and see my performers insulted."

His

His Lordship not chusing to resent this opposition from the manager, so as to make a serious affair of it, very prudently retired to his seat in the stage-box, meditating revenge. But he was no sooner seated there, than the audience, who generally engage on the side that humanity points out, took the alarm, and obliged his Lordship to retire from thence to the front boxes; in the back part of which he concealed himself from further insult.

Mr. Quin not playing that night, he was not at the theatre; but the next evening he was informed of the terror I had undergone. Mr. Thomson, who had heard of it likewise, came to the house. As this gentleman passed near the back of the stage, he heard two persons in conversation, one of whom said to the other, "I will speak to her to night, or I will shoot my——." The remainder of the sentence Mr. Thomson could not catch, but from the former part of it he concluded, that it could be no other than Lord Byron, thus uttering his designs in confidence to a friend; and who, in revenge for the disgrace he had undergone the preceding night, had determined to carry me off.

Mr. Thomson immediately acquainted Mr. Quin with the discourse he had been witness to, who adopted the same opinion. Accordingly the latter sent to me during the performance, and desired to speak with me as

soon as my part was finished. His character having concluded in the fourth act, I found him undrest. The moment he saw me, he addressed me in a precipitate manner to the following purpose: "Madam, we must have no charring it to-night. You must go home under my arm." You may be assured I was not a little frightened. But, upon his further assuring me that I should be safely escorted, and that he would send for his supper to my lodgings, where Mr. Thomson was to make one of the party, my fears subsided.

When I was undrest, Mr. Quin ordered my chair to be brought from the stage-door in Bow-street, with all the curtains drawn, into the passage, that it might be supposed I was actually in it; whilst we went through the house, and by way of the piazzas, into Tavistock-street, where my mother and myself then lodged. We consequently got home before the chair could reach our house. When the fellows arrived, they informed us that they had been stopped on the way by a man muffled up in a great coat. That at first they affected to be unwilling to set down their fare; but upon the person's being peremptory, they obeyed his orders. He then lifted up the top of the chair, and threw something into it, swearing at the same time, that if the answer was not favourable, he was determined to destroy himself.

self. Having said this, he put the lid down, and ordered them to carry the lady home.

Our curiosity being excited by this account, Mr. Quin ordered the letter, which had been thrown into the chair, to be taken out. Whilst this was doing, one of the fellows said, he was sure the poor gentleman meant no harm to Miss, as he was one of the best men in the world. He added, that he had delivered me a letter from him some time ago; but I was so angry that he never durst venture to give me another. "And pray who is that gentleman?" said Mr. Quin. "Why, Sir," replied the chairman, "It is his honour Mr. Bullock." The letter being by this time brought, Mr. Quin desired he might be permitted to read it. It was much against my inclination that it should be opened, as I had already received so many from the same person, that I had formed a resolution to send back his epistles in future as they came. The letter, however, was read, and the contents found to breathe nothing but love and madness. The inditer of it was a young gentleman of good expectations, being heir to a considerable estate. He was educated at Cambridge, and had not yet left college. His person was remarkably handsome, but the violence of his behaviour terrified instead of engaging me. Mr. Quin, who was well acquainted with his father, put the letter into his pocket, and

and promised to bring the young man to reason.

We had just sat down to supper, when a waiter came from the Bedford with a letter directed for me. Here I cannot avoid stopping a minute to trouble you with another *soliloquy*. I think that word is full as applicable to a moral reflection when written alone, as when spoken alone; at least I shall use it upon this occasion, as I cannot just now find another more expressive; and beg a truce with your criticism.—But to come to this same soliloquy.—To what continual solicitations are females in the *theatrical line*, whose persons or abilities render them conspicuous, exposed! They go through an ordeal almost equally hazardous to that used of old as a test of chastity. The maturest judgment and firmest resolution are required, to enable them to steer aright. And is this to be expected from frail fair ones, hoodwinked by youth, inexperience, vanity, and all the softer passions? Instead of wondering that *so many* of those who tread the stage yield to the temptations by which they are surrounded, it is rather a matter of amazement that *all* do not. Continually besieged by persons of the highest rank, who are *practised* in the arts of seduction, and empowered by their affluence to carry the most expensive and alluring of these into execution, it is next to impossible that the fortress should

should be impregnable,—Fortunate is it for many who pride themselves in their *untried* virtue, that their lot is cast in a less hazardous state.

We had just sat down to supper, as I said before, when a waiter came from the Bedford-Head, with a letter directed for me. The servant indiscreetly took it in; which so shocked my mother's delicacy, that I had almost said she made herself ridiculous. I could not refrain from telling her, that it was not possible for me to be contaminated by the impertinence of a man that must be inebriated, or he would not have taken such an unwarrantable liberty. Nor could the house from whence it came give her just cause for offence; as Woodfield's, though situated in Covent-Garden, was honoured with parties of the best character, ladies as well as gentlemen.

Upon opening the scrawl, we found it came from Lord Byron; who, though he was lately married to one of the best and loveliest of her sex, made me therein an offer of a settlement. His Lordship concluded with swearing that if I did not consent to his proposal, he would pursue me till I took shelter in another's arms. As soon as Mr. Quin had read the letter, he called for pen and ink, and sent the following answer to it.

“Lieutenant O'Hara's compliments to Lord Byron, and if he ever dares to insult his
“sister

“ sister again, it shall not be either his title
 “ or cowardice that shall preserve him from
 “ chastisement.” This fortunate impromptu of Mr. Quin’s so frightened his Lordship, that the waiter came soon after to let us know he was gone. And we found that this valliant nobleman actually set off the next morning for Nottinghamshire. Nor have I ever since been troubled with his attacks. Lady Byron, some time after, came to my benefit, and honoured me with marks of her generosity ; which were the more pleasing to me, as they likewise afforded a proof of the liberality of her sentiments.

Could you have formed any conception that there had been men of his Lordship’s cast ? of those who break their marriage vows *so soon* after they have been made ; ere they had well reached Heaven’s portals ? Yet such you see there are. But from such false ones may Hymen preserve you, and every other worthy woman.

G. A. B.

LETTER XXXI

June 5th, 1790.

AFTER being delivered from the apprehensions Lord Byron had occasioned, I thought myself perfectly happy. I was, however,

however, doomed to sustain fresh unhappiness from another quarter; and that was from my mother's Irish friend Mr. Crump, in whose favour she was constantly teizing me. They had carried on a correspondence together ever since we came from Ireland. But that I did not wonder at; as my mother had met with great success in the profession he had advised her to engage in, and she had occasion frequently to send him over commissions for linens.

As I always made it a point never to read a letter belonging to another, *even if open*, esteeming it a breach of the most sacred of trusts, many of his epistles to her lay carelessly scattered about, without my ever looking into one of them. An accident, however, soon happened, which obliged me, contrary to my resolutions, to inspect the last she received from him.

Mr. Quin thinking that the force of the company lay in comedy, he introduced me into every piece which contained a character suited to my figure and age. As he was excellent in the Double Dealer, and Mrs. Woffington was well received in Lady Touchwood, I had an opportunity of appearing in Lady Froth; a character which would afford ample room for the exertion of my fancy and humour. I accordingly performed it, and met with better success than I had reason

to hope, as it was a part the inimitable Clive had been long in possession of.

Whether the applause I had received, or the brilliancy of my dress, or some other cause, occasioned it, I know not; but I was elevated by an uncommon flow of spirits on the first night of its performance. Thus chearful, as I sat in the green room, who should enter it but Mr. Montgomery, since Sir George Metham, whom I have already mentioned as an admirer of mine. The unexpected sight of that gentleman greatly surprised me; and without considering how preposterous such a step might appear to the rest of the performers, I found myself involuntarily led by some impulse, to which I had till now been a stranger, to get up to receive him as he approached me. Such a mark of distinction could not pass unnoticed by him, and he seemed to receive it with inexpressible transport.

Nor did it pass unobserved by Mrs. Woffington. The tender respect he shewed me seemed to hurt her pride. As to the other female performers present, they were all, except Mrs. Ward, persons of more respectable characters. They loved their husbands, minded their business, and found too much employment in their own families, to trouble themselves with the concerns of others.

Mr. Metham found means to inform me, during the short conversation we had together

ther (for as I was looked upon as a prude by the company, a longer one would have been imprudent) that his mother was dead, by which he was come into possession of a good estate, together with the name of Metham. As the attention of a person, whose dress, deportment, and appearance, proclaimed him a man of fashion, seemed to excite the jealousy of Mrs. Woffington, who expected to have the tribute of admiration from every one first paid to her, I put an end, as soon as possible, to our *tête-à-tête*. But at the conclusion of the play, Mr. Metham accosted me again, and desired permission to wait on me the next morning. This I told him I could not grant; at the same time frankly informing him, that my reason for so doing so, was because my mother would not consent to my admitting any male visitor in the quality of a lover. He then begged to be allowed to write to me; which I did not refuse. Upon this we parted.

The entering into this correspondence, obliged me to request O'Bryen, who had attended us to England, to pay a particular attention to taking in my letters, so that they might not fall into my mother's hands. I have already informed you that this lady, notwithstanding her *royal descent*, had not had the education she had consequently a right to expect. In truth, she could neither read nor write; which sometimes led her into errors

errors, when those crooked things called letters, were the only guides she had to direct her. Thus it happened, that one day finding a letter in the parlour, she concluded it was one that I had dropped, and accordingly brought it to me.

Without examining whether it belonged to me or not, I put it hastily into my pocket. And it was not till I had occasion to search for another, wherein mention was made of a masquerade, that I discovered it. Pulling it out with three others which I had received in the course of the day, I then perceived that it was an epistle from my Hibernian admirer to my mother. At the same time a dash annexed to the word daughter exciting my curiosity, I was tempted to break through the rule I had hitherto so inviolably observed. The line ran thus: "Dear Madam, I believe your loved daughter cannot withstand the power of——." As I could not understand the meaning of this sentence, and indeed was very indifferent about it, I threw the letter aside, without perusing the remainder of it.

The next evening I appeared in the character of Alicia. As soon as my part was concluded, Mr. Quin, with a pleasure sparkling in his fine eyes, that I had never seen them express before off the stage, bid me stop and kneel to the first person I met in the scene-room; a place I was obliged to pass

pass as I went to undress. As I could not comprehend at first what Mr. Quin meant, alternate hope and fear rendered me motionless for some time. At length my heart presaged who it was. When mustering all my courage, and judging from the pleasantness of my patron's countenance, that I had not much to fear, I entered the room. I need not, I suppose, inform you, that I found there Lord Tyrawley. As soon as I saw him I threw myself at his feet, crying out at the same time, with an emotion that is not to be expressed, "My dear Lord, forgive me!"

His Lordship having raised me, he embraced me with the utmost tenderness; and if I could judge from his voice, was no less affected than myself. He then desired me to hasten home, as Quin and he intended supping at my apartments. His Lordship informed me, that he had received from Mr. Quin such an account of me, as had given him the highest satisfaction; and which corroborated what he had heard in Ireland, from a person, who, *when alive*, loved me as well as that gentleman did. Concluding from this, that my dear Mrs. O'Hara had paid the last debt of nature, I burst afresh into tears.—Though gratitude impelled me to bestow this tender tribute on her loved memory, yet I checked it as soon as possible, and blamed myself for giving
way

way to so improper, though customary a sensation. As she was one of the best of women, I could not doubt her happiness; and sorrow, as that was the case, according to my ideas, is only self-love. The living, who are left in this vale of tears, are *rather* to be wept for; the dead, where, from a well spent life, they have the assurance of happiness that my dear aunt had, are objects of envy, not of grief.

Mr. Quin allowed his Lordship and myself an hour for private conversation before he came. And as the next day happened to be a holiday, we were not obliged to separate at an early hour. Indeed, Mr. Quin seldom kept early hours, unless he was obliged to do so by indisposition. My mother was not permitted to join us; and his Lordship gave me a severe injunction never to request that he would see either of the ladies of my family, as he was determined never to speak to or know them. He delivered me two rings; one of which, being a large pink diamond, was very valuable; the other a fancy ring; both of which had been left me by Mrs. O'Hara. I apprehend this was not the whole of my legacy; but as his Lordship took no notice of any thing else, I could not with propriety ask him.

I now thought myself the happiest of human beings. Restored to the affections of
the

the two people I most valued, and loved almost to adoration by the man I preferred to all others, my satisfaction was unbounded. Nor do I believe that any three people in the world were happier than my company and myself; each enjoying an equal place in my affections, though the claims of each were of a different nature.—Great are the pleasures arising from susceptibility!—Many indeed, and exquisite, are likewise the pains attendant on it.—The inexpressible pleasure of making happy, by a mutual reciprocation of beneficent acts and tender communications, greatly overpays, however, the disadvantages of possessing a susceptible heart.—The enlarged mind alone is capable of these mental enjoyments.—By the liberal-minded, therefore, are the delicate sensations I speak of, only to be comprehended.—To the million they are caviare.—As they are the only source of *real* happiness in this life, they doubtless, when rendered more pure and perfect, will constitute our felicity in “that undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller returns.”

I am now about to enter upon a topic of a different nature from any that has hitherto found a place in my epistles; but although it appears not to make a part of my own concerns, I flatter myself that a story so interesting, and flowing immediately from the fountain-head, from which its authenticity

is undoubted, will not make you consider the time required in the perusal of it misemployed.

G. A. B.

LETTER XXXII.

June 18, 17—.

YOU must have heard of the intended rebellion in Russia during the reign of the great Czarina Elizabeth. It is indeed *generally* known that such a revolution was planned and nearly taking place. But the means by which it was discovered and prevented, are known but to a very few. I will therefore relate them to you in the same circumstantial manner Lord Tyrawley repeated them to Mr. Quin and myself that evening.

From his Lordship's residing so many years at the courts of Spain and Portugal, he had acquired a strong attachment to the natives of both those kingdoms. And as he was happy in every opportunity that offered for shewing this regard for them, they entertained the highest respect for his Lordship. During my Lord's residence at the court of Russia, he observed a Spaniard to walk frequently, for several days together, before the court-yard of his hotel. Excited by the national attachment just mentioned, his Lordship ordered one of his domestics to invite the
Don

Don to dine at the second table. The Spaniard accepted the invitation with the greatest readiness, and seemed glad to have an opportunity of laying by his long spada for some hours every day. This continued for several months, so that the stranger was at length considered as one of the family.

At the expiration of that time, he came late one evening, and requested the domestic in waiting to inform his Excellency, that he wished to have the honour to speak to him. The servant supposing his business was not of a nature to require his seeing his Lordship that night, desired he would call in the morning. But on the man's saying, "The morning will not do, it must be immediately," his Lordship was informed of his request, and the Spaniard ordered to be admitted. Upon his being introduced, he thus accosted his Lordship in Spanish, the moment they were alone, "I am come, my Lord, to repay all your civilities—But before I explain myself, order your berlin to be got ready."

The mysterious air which the Spaniard assumed upon this occasion soon convinced his Lordship of what he had suspected for some time, that his new dependent belonged to that fraternity, so necessary to every power, termed spies. He therefore ordered his carriage to be got ready. When this was done, the stranger thus continued: "I

“ have for some time, my Lord, formed a
 “ very strict intimacy with a Russ in the
 “ suite of the Marquis de Chattardy. After
 “ leaving your Excellency’s hotel I generally
 “ go to spend some hours with him. Stay-
 “ ing at the Marquis’s hotel a few evenings
 “ ago, later than usual, I saw a person come
 “ in who endeavoured to hide himself from
 “ observation, as if desirous to remain un-
 “ known. This, your Lordship may be as-
 “ sured, awoke my suspicions; and as from
 “ the glimpse I had of him, I could only
 “ guess who it was, I resolved if possible to
 “ arrive at some certainty about it. For
 “ this purpose, when my friend returned, I
 “ asked him, with a careless air, whether the
 “ Comte ——— (I have forgot the name of
 “ this nobleman, but he was the favourite con-
 “ fidential servant of the Empress) “ usually
 “ *walked* at that inclement season of the year.
 “ I took no further notice at that time; but
 “ went as usual to visit my friend the follow-
 “ ing evening. I did not, however, ring at
 “ the gate of the hotel, till I saw the Comte
 “ go in, who I guessed would be there about
 “ the same time.
 “ Having gained admittance soon after
 “ him, instead of going to my friend’s apart-
 “ ment, being well acquainted with every
 “ part of the hotel, I gained, unobserved, the
 “ back stairs, and placed myself near the clo-
 “ set in which his Excellency the Marquis
 “ and

“and the Comte were in conversation. There
“I overheard the latter say, among other
“things, to the Marquis in Italian, “I think
“the sooner you go the better. The cre-
“dentials will be ready by eleven o’clock.”
“As soon as I had heard this, I stole from
“my hiding-place, and went immediately
“to my friend, who chid me for being so
“late, as he could not now profit by my
“company, from having so much to do.

“I asked him what he had to do at this
“time more than another. To this he re-
“plied that he would not betray his master’s
“secrets, though indeed he merited it, as
“he had broke his promise in not taking
“him with him.” I did not make any fur-
“ther enquiry, lest what he imparted to me
“should have been under the seal of secre-
“cy; and a Spaniard, your Excellency
“knows, is too tenacious of his honour to
“betray any thing that is divulged to him
“in confidence.”

“And what do you suppose,” said his
Lordship, “are the motives, and will be the
“consequences, of the Marquis’s stealing
“away? — “A revolution;” replied the
Spaniard; “and if your Lordship does not
“make haste to the Empress, and inform
“her with what I tell you, it will be too late
“to prevent it. I am acquainted with the
“whole circumstances, but am not at liberty
“to mention more. Your Lordship, how-

“NOT”

C

“ever,

“ever, may take my life, if the intelligence
“I give you proves false.”

His Lordship having been already convinced from his own observations, and the information he had received from other quarters, that there was something portentous to the welfare of the Russian empire in agitation; after having tried the Spaniard to the utmost, he gave credit to what he said; and was now satisfied that his informant had received some intelligence under the seal of secrecy, as he termed it, the particulars of which he made a point of honour not to disclose, although he thought it no breach of honour to repeat the substance of it.

The carriage being by this time ready, Lord Tyrawley and the Spaniard set out together for the Empress's palace, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour and the inclemency of the weather. The English Ambassador procured admittance to her majesty immediately. But the Empress seemed to doubt the possibility of his information, till the Spaniard was called in; who gave her such convincing proofs of what was intended, that she could no longer doubt the truth of his assertions. Her majesty then proposed sending such a particular troop to prevent the designs, she had just been informed of, from being carried into execution. But the Spaniard exclaimed, “No, you must secure them,
“as they are now actually under arms against
“you.”

“you.” The light at this time shone full upon them, as they were part of her body guard, and her favourite, Wall, Colonel of them. Some troops were sent to prevent the escape of the Marquis de Chattardy, but he was already fled; and, though pursued, found means to make his escape. He had not however time to destroy his papers. These were secured and brought to the palace. The regiment suspected were found under arms, which created a certainty of their intended treason. The treachery of her favourite, the Comte was fully proved. But through some remains of that regard which she once entertained for him, his life was spared, and he was banished to Siberia. Whilst all those whom he had prevailed upon to join in his treacherous views, were immediately executed. Her majesty took the Spaniard into her service, and rewarded him nobly. And the presents she made Lord Tyravley for the services he rendered her on this occasion, though of immense value, were not, in his estimation, of so much worth as the friendship with which she honoured him to the day of her death.

G. A. B.

LETTER XXXIII.

June 29, 17—.

LORD TYRAWLEY gave us the foregoing story, the first evening we passed together, among many other entertaining anecdotes. The night passed away in a sweet delirium, as you may suppose, with two such bright geniuses as his Lordship and Mr. Quin, — Every word conveyed extatic delight to a mind fond of learning and the belles lettres; to a person tremblingly alive to every rational enjoyment, as well as every delicate sensation. — Like Circe “They would take the prisoned soul, and lap it in Elysium.” — Whilst the brilliant jest, and smart repartee, afforded food for laughter, their observations on men and books supplied me with a lasting fund of instruction.

Before we broke up, his Lordship promised to sup with me three or four times a week, and begged Mr. Quin to be of the party as often as possible. But as he loved his good fat capon; his ale and orange; and *ungartering*, as he called it; which he esteemed the three great blessings of life; and as Lord Tyrawley was not fond of the bottle; he did not often favour me with his company at my apartments. I had however the *entrée* at his house

house, where I spent every evening. I could spare from other engagements.

Late as it was before his Lordship and Mr. Quin left me, I sat down, before I slept, to inform Mr. Metham of the happiness I enjoyed in being restored to his Lordship's favour. But much as it delighted *me*, it gave no satisfaction to *him*. He however affected to be pleased with the intelligence I sent him, in compliment to me, as he seemed to partake in every thing that afforded me pleasure. Indeed we carried our ideas of love to so romantic a height, that the correspondence, which by this time had commenced between us, partook more of the sentiments of Cassandra and Oroondates, than of persons on a level with the rest of mankind.

There was so much sentiment and respect, both in his letters and behaviour, that I never gave myself time to reflect on the imprudence I was guilty of in entering into a private intimacy with a man, who had formerly declared that it was not in his power to pay his addressee to me on honourable terms. Nay, that very declaration, as it appeared to give me a proof of his openness and candour, lulled me into a false security. And from that circumstance I placed so much dependence upon his honour, which I supposed equal to his sincerity, that I never harboured a fear of his entertaining the least dishonourable thought.—More females owe their ruin to

this false security, than to the incitements of vanity or passion.—Thrown off their guard by placing an implicit confidence in the man they love, they find too late, in their own dishonour, that the expected honour of their betrayers has been but an empty bubble.

About this time having an opportunity to go to a masquerade, I readily embraced the offer, that I might meet my lover there, and be more at liberty to enjoy his conversation than I had been able to do. Having never been at such an entertainment before, I expressed my surprise to Mr. Metham how people were able to find one another out, with their faces so covered that the features were not distinguishable. He replied, “That my eyes would light him; and that *intuition* would prevent any mistake.

I certainly preferred Mr. Metham to any man living. My regard for him, however, was not so violent but what it was to give way to my humour. Accordingly, when the night arrived, I wrapped myself in a black domino, with a large capot over it, and in this unexpected dress, accompanied by the Miss Merediths, in the habits of Savoyard girls, entered the room. In a very short time I was as well acquainted with the nature of the entertainment as Heidegger * himself. And as my companions were too much noticed to

* The person who first introduced masked balls into England.

mind me, I soon gave them the slip, and sought out my Strephon. I found him employed in examining every well dressed female that passed him, not doubting, but that I should make use of so favourable an opportunity to show my taste, and appear what is usually termed an elegant mask. When I spied him, I made up to him and asked him, what fair one kept him in waiting. Impatient to behold her he loved, he desired me to go about my business; for it was not me he wanted. I told him he had better accept the offer of my company, which I assured him I had the vanity to presume would prove full as agreeable to him as the person he was in expectation of. Upon this he turned away quite enraged.

Seeing that vanity and folly here went hand-in-hand, of both of which I seemed to have a tolerable share, I let him *croquer le marmot*; and I acknowledge that I did not enjoy a little pleasure in the disquietude he appeared to experience.

I now joined General Wall, the Spanish Ambassador; who had frequented the scenes, and with whom I had the honour of chatting now and then. Comte Haslang, the Imperial and Bavarian Ambassador, had pointed me out to his Excellency. The Comte often visited at Lord Tyrawley's, who paid him particular attention, not so much for the brilliancy of his parts, which

were but *la la*, as for his noble descent, his extreme politeness, and his appearing to be pleased with the wit of others, without ever making pretence to any himself. Though his Excellency the Comte was not rendered sharp-sighted by the hood-winked boy called Love, yet he discovered me immediately through my deep disguise, and made me known to the General.

Notwithstanding General Wall's knowledge was universal, and his fame for wit established, he loved mischief as well as any school-boy could. And having no doubt, from the observations he had made at the theatre, that Mr. Metham was a professed admirer of mine, he begged to join me in the persecution he saw I was carrying on. We accordingly made up to Metham, whom I railled in the same manner I had done before. But what made my raillery the more irksome to him, was, that from the General's being unmasked, he could not leave abruptly a person of his Excellency's consequence, and was of course obliged to hear the whole of it. Not doubting, I suppose, at the same time, that though I appeared from my habit to be an old fright, I was a person of no little consequence myself.

Lord Tyrawley supped with a private party, so that I was at liberty to follow the bent of my humour without any restraint, during the greatest part of the night. About

four o'clock his Lordship returned to the great room; and having found out my companions and myself, begged leave to see us to our chairs, as he could not think of leaving three girls in such a place, unless we had brought with us a *chaperon*. The young ladies having exhausted their spirits with dancing, were not sorry to hear his Lordship make the offer. I own that to have staid a little longer would have been full as agreeable to me. That, however, was not now to be done, and it was agreed that we should go.

This sudden determination only permitted me just to say to Mr. Metham, as I passed him, "What is become of the brilliancy of those eyes, which, with your blessed intuition, were to render every other information unnecessary?" Thunder-struck at these words, he appeared to be instantly aroused from the stupidity, with regard to the knowledge of me, that had overwhelmed him the whole night. He spontaneously followed us to the door, endeavouring to speak to me. But that was now impossible. He was consequently obliged to lament in silence his hard fate, and regret having lost an opportunity, which might not happen again for a long time.

This disappointment of Metham's confirmed what I have before observed, that where our hopes of happiness are the most sanguine, the surer seems their frustra-

tion—Poor fellow ! with what rapture did he receive the first intelligence of my going to the masquerade !—How did he count the tedious minutes till the wished-for hour arrived !—How did he anticipate the pleasures he expected would result from a conversation carried on without restraint ; and in which he might freely declare the fervency of his affection.—And what was the result of those pleasing expectations ?—Alas !—Disappointment, anxiety and vexation.—The teazings of an old woman, instead of the reluctantly acknowledged tenderness of a young one.—And to add to all, a torturing discovery of the frolicksome deception.

I own this treatment favoured somewhat of cruelty.—But women, throughout every age, have not scrupled to indulge themselves in these little playfome tests of their lovers' truth and constancy.—At this time, to make use of a homespun expression, " The black ox had not trodden on my foot."—Innocent humour was my delight.—Euphrosyne herself was not more blithe and debonair.

G. A. B.

LETTER XXXIV.

June 12, 17—

ABOUT this period, that much admired poet, Thomson, was called by the great disposer of events, to enjoy that felicity

city in a happier region, he had in vain strove to deserve in this bustling world. His death seemed to throw an universal gloom over every susceptible mind. Whilst some lamented the loss of his great poetical talents, all wept for the removal of so great a man. The softness of his manners, his unbounded philanthropy, and indeed the possession of every valuable quality that can adorn a human being, endeared him to every one who had the happiness to be acquainted with him. That it was my fortunate lot to be upon terms of intimacy with him, is one of the most pleasing circumstances of my life that recollection can revive.—Accept, departed shade, this tender tear! a votive tribute to that friendship with which I was honoured by thee.

Lord Lyttelton and Mr. Quin, from the intimacy which had subsisted between Thomson and them, were the most affected by this sad event. After the first effusions of their sorrow were abated, they consulted in what manner to pay the most efficacious respect to the memory of their deceased friend. As his liberal disposition had prevented him from making any provision for his two sisters, they thought they could do nothing more consonant to his last wishes, than provide a decent support for them. A token of affection far more acceptable, I dare say, to their lost friend, if departed spirits be
sensible

sensible of what passes here, than the most pompous obsequies, or richly sculptured monument.

Thomson, during the latter part of his life, had altered Shakspeare's tragedy of "Coriolanus;" the copy of which Mr. Quin had then in his possession. And the representation of this they thought would not a little conduce to the benevolent purpose. It was accordingly ordered to be got up at the theatre, and put immediately into rehearsal. Mrs. Woffington and myself were to play the parts of the mother and daughter. The death of Thomson put a stop for some time to our parties at Mr. Quin's, in Henrietta-street, which gave us more time to expedite the performance. Lord Lyttelton wrote the following prologue to it.

PRO-

P R O L O G U E

T O

T H O M S O N ' S C O R I O L A N U S .

S P O K E N B Y M R . Q U I N .

I COME not here your candour to implore
 For scenes whose author is, alas! no more;
 He wants no advocate his cause to plead;
 You will yourselves be patrons of the dead.
 No party his benevolence confin'd,
 No sect—alike it flow'd to all mankind.
 He lov'd his friends, (forgive this gushing tear:
 Alas! I feel I am no actor here;)
 He lov'd his friends with such a warmth of heart,
 So clear of int'rest, so devoid of art,
 Such gen'rous friendship, such unshaken zeal,
 No words can speak it, but our tears may tell.—
 O candid truth! O faith without a stain!
 O manners gently firm and nobly plain!
 O sympathizing love of others bliss!
 Where will you find another breast like his?
 Such was the man—The poet well you know;
 Oft has he touch'd your hearts with tender woe;
 Oft in this croud'd house with just applause
 You heard him teach fair virtue's purest laws;
 For his chaste muse employ'd her heav'n-taught lyre
 None but the noblest passions to inspire;
 Not one immoral, one corrupted thought,
 One line which dying he could wish to blot.
 Oh! may to-night your favourable doom
 Another laurel add to grace his tomb.
 Whilst he, superior now to praise or blame,
 Hears not the feeble voice of human fame.
 Yet if to those whom most on earth he lov'd,
 From whom his pious care is now remov'd,
 With whom his lib'ral hand and bounteous heart
 Shar'd all his little fortune could impart,
 If to those friends your kind regard shall give
 What they no longer can from him receive,
 That, that ev'n now, above yon starry pole,
 May touch with pleasure his immortal soul.

As

As soon as the piece was perfect, an evening rehearsal was called, upon a night when there happened to be no performance. Mr. Quin's pronounciation was of the old school. In this Mr. Garrick had made an alteration. The one pronounced the letter *a* open; the other sounded it like an *e*; which occasioned the following laughable mistake. In the piece, when the Roman ladies come in procession to solicit Coriolanus to return to Rome, they are attended by the tribunes. And the centurions of the Volscian army bearing *fascies*, their ensigns of authority, they are ordered by the hero (the part of which was played by Mr. Quin) to lower them as a token of respect. But the men who personated the centurions, imagining, through Mr. Quin's mode of pronounciation, that he said their *faces*, instead of their *fascies*, all bowed their heads together.

Not being able to withstand so ridiculous a mistake, I could not restrain my risible faculties; and though tragedians ought to have an entire command of the countenance, I burst into a fit of laughter. This, for a moment, offended Mr. Quin, and drew the attention of the literati that were present, who, with many others, followed my example. The men, however, were at length set right, and thus the affair ended.

Had such a ludicrous mistake happened on the night of its representation, it would pro-

probably have excited the same emotions in the audience we had experienced, and might have proved fatal to the piece, or at least have interrupted the capital scene. The play, however, was at length represented with success, and Mr. Quin really shed tears. From the cynical manner that gentleman had adopted, and the sternness of his countenance, he was not supposed to possess so much of the milk of human kindness as he actually did. The circumstance was therefore considered as doubly forcible, and did not fail to operate on the sensibility of the whole house; who likewise testified, by their sympathetic tears, the respect they bore his friend.

The season of Lent now coming on, I had more leisure time on my hands than usual, and consequently had more frequent opportunities of seeing and hearing from Mr. Metham. He attended at Comte Haslang's chapel every Wednesday and Friday evening, where I generally met him. And so confident was I of his honour and affection, that if he happened to be indisposed, I made no scruple to go to his lodgings. Nor had I ever any reason to repent of my condescension; as he never attempted even to salute me. So much respect, mingled with tenderness, confirmed the partiality I before entertained for him; and what may be called at first only a preference, was now mellowed into esteem,

teem, friendship, and affection. This, perhaps, is the happiest æra of the human life.—An innocent familiarity takes place, unim-bittered by those apprehensions that experience gives birth to; and unalloyed by that satiety which too surely attends the enjoyment of our wishes.—Youth, chearfulness, and pleasing expectations, unite to brighten the scene, and afford the happy pair an unclouded prospect.

Lord Tyrawley continued his visits; and the better to enable me to entertain him in the stile which duty and respect dictated, he generally divided the contents of his purse with me whenever he came. Being, therefore, through his Lordship's generosity, and the advantages she reaped from the disposal of her linen, in no want of money, my mother had not as yet sent to the theatre for any part of my salary; which she had concluded to have been settled at ten pounds a week. But having now an occasion to make a remittance to Ireland, she wrote to the treasurer to desire he would let her have what was due. Instead, however, of sending the sum she had calculated to be owing to me, she received only half as much.

Enraged at this duplicity, she laid her commands upon me not to play any more. Indeed, she was not displeased at the excuse that now presented itself of breaking off my theatrical engagements. On the contrary, she

she was glad of the opportunity that offered of effecting her darling scheme, that of uniting me to Mr. Crump. She accordingly sent back the money; and my pride assisting her views, she now made sure of bringing her long-wished-for project to bear. Miss O'Hara, who was perfectly well acquainted with my sentiments on the subject, endeavoured by every argument in her power, to dissuade her from pursuing a plan to which I was so inflexibly averse. But her endeavours were ineffectual. My mother continued as resolute as her daughter; though I unfortunately found means to frustrate her intentions.

As the regard Mr. Metham and myself entertained for each other, had now attained such a pitch, that I considered him as my future husband, I made no scruple to accept the presents he was continually offering me. These past unobserved by my mother, who concluded that what money I had, was the consequence of my Lord's affection, which seemed daily to increase. The eye of envy, however, would not suffer so suspicious a circumstance to pass unnoticed; nor was so favourable a construction put upon my apparent affluence by my two theatrical companions, Mrs. Woffington and Mrs Ward. Being unwilling to account for the elegance of my dress, by imputing it, as my mother had done, to an allowable source, they thought it could only proceed from my
having

having formed an unallowable connection with Mr Metham. Taking this for granted, they did not hesitate to mention it as an affair that was absolutely settled. I did not indeed, hear of this scandal, at the time it was propagated by these censorious ladies at the theatre, having no intimacy with any person belonging to it, except Mr. Quin, Mr. Rich's family, and Mrs. Ridout. This amiable woman, I must stop to tell you, fell a victim to her fondness for her husband, the loss of whose affections she could not outlive; and I never reflect on her untimely death, without bestowing a sigh on her virtues.

Had I heard of these aspersions, conscious of my innocence, I should have treated them with the contempt they deserved; but, as I have just said, from my having so little communication with the people belonging to the theatre, I was not at that time made acquainted with them. Mrs. Woffington, however, notwithstanding she had propagated this scandalous report, reflecting that my quitting the theatre, particularly as the benefits were coming on, would prove an essential detriment to the whole company, she sent Mr. Swyny to me, in order to prevail on me to relinquish my intention. This gentleman had attached himself to her as a warm friend. And he gave her a substantial proof of his regard, by leaving her the bulk of his fortune at his decease. But though
this

this lady's ambaffador urged her fuit with all his rhetoric, I would not come to any determination relative to it, till I had confulted Mr. Quin on the fubject, agreeable to the refolution I had lately formed.

As foon as I fent to this beft of friends, he came to me; and upon talking over the affair, he judged it moft prudent for me to continue my attendance at the theatre during the prefent feafon, as it was now drawing near a conclufion. Among other reafons he obferved, that as I was in all the pieces commanded, on every Thursday night, by the prince and princefs of Wales, and had been honoured with diftinguifhed marks of approbation from their Royal Highneffes, as well as the public, he thought no pecuniary motive fhould induce me to decline playing during the remainder of the feafon. Giving up my refentment, therefore, to the opinion of fo good a judge, and fo fincere a friend, I continued to perform as ufual, without coming to an open rupture with the proprietor on account of his duplicity.

G. A. B.

July 21, 17—.

THE same evening, when Lord Tyrawley came to sup with me as usual, I informed him of the ill treatment I had received. His Lordship seemed displeased that I did not carry my first resolution of quitting the theatre into execution. Notwithstanding his Lordship was reconciled to me, and he still continued to live at such an expence as to involve himself annually, although in receipt of immense sums from his employments and commission, I could not help observing that he made no offer of furnishing me with a provision adequate to the emoluments I reaped from my profession. As I considered the affront I had received from the proprietor, of the highest magnitude to my theatrical consequence, I own I was much surprised at his being so lukewarm upon the occasion.

A few minutes, however, explained the mystery. For looking kindly at me, his Lordship said, "Pop! you do not love me so well as you did even some few weeks ago." Struck at the truth of the accusation, a conscious blush spread itself over my face, and I remained silent. "Why do you not speak?" continued he. "If your heart is engaged to a proper object, I will
 "give

“ give him your hand. I flattered myself
“ indeed, that your affection for me was so
“ unbounded, that you would have left the
“ choice to me.”

This alone could have restored to me the power of speech. Mr. Crump's letter seemed now to be fully explained; and the dash appeared to have been substituted in the room of Lord Tyrawley's name. I told his Lordship, that as nothing should tempt me to lose sight of sincerity, I would freely acknowledge to him, that though I loved and revered him much, I felt a strong presentiment in favour of another. But unless his Lordship would give me time to examine into the real state of my heart, I must beg to be excused from making him acquainted with the name of the person.

His Lordship having heard of the adventure of the chair and the note, already related, and having been likewise informed that Mr. Bullock's father had sworn that he never would see or speak to his son again, if he married me: and considering, likewise, that he himself cou'd not offer a fortune with me sufficient to mollify the old gentleman; his Lordship, (for the first time I ever heard him swear, although a soldier) told me with an oath, that he already knew the person, and that I might rest assured he never would consent to an union with him.

The

The addressees I had some time backed received from Mr. Bullock, who had been ordered by his father, immediately on their discovery to return to college, not recurring to my mind, I concluded it was Mr. Metham his Lordship was thus exasperated against. I was consequently thunderstruck. His Lordship continued in an ill humour during the remainder of his stay; and it was the first time I ever felt a pleasure at our separation.

The next morning, I acquainted Mr. Metham, by letter, that I was very unhappy at something which had happened, but did not explain myself. This opposition of his Lordship to the person I esteemed, (for to him I supposed it, by mistake, to be intended) endeared him to me a thousand times, if possible, more than he had already been. And what was before only a transient quiet partiality, now became a violent impetuous affection. A heart engaged in such a sweet, such a bewitching entanglement as mine was, could not bear controul. Opposition, I now perceived, but added fuel to the flame: And however great my respect for Lord Tyrrawley might have been, it was not to be set in competition with claims of a tenderer nature.

My benefit was now to take place in a few days; and the three preceding nights I was to perform for those of Mr. Quin, Mrs. Woffington, and Mr. Ryan. The former chose
for

for his benefit, the very play in which I had been deprived, during my emigration to Ireland, as already mentioned, of my regalia. Here Mrs. Woffington was, as her right, adorned with it, and appeared *most characteristically* as the enchantress of all hearts. Her beauty (for I must give every one their due) beggared all description. I appeared again in white satin; not indeed, as I had then *improperly* done, as Anthony's favourite mistress, but as his rejected wife.

The Dutchess of Queensberry being at Mr. Quin's benefit, her partiality for me shewed itself in a more flattering light than it had done on a former occasion. At the conclusion of the piece, she desired me to secure her boxes for my own benefit. As I could not suppose that her Grace intended to interest herself so strenuously in my behalf, as she had before; and as I was now, by experience, become acquainted with the whimsicalness of her Grace's disposition; I was at a loss what number to set down for her. I thought it, therefore, better to leave it to chance, than to run the risk of offending her.

Her Grace having expressed a desire of being admitted into the green-room, which she had been informed was superior to a drawing-room, for the wit and politeness to be met with there, I begged leave to have the honour to attend her Grace to it, after the performance was over. This offer she

was pleased to accept. Accordingly as soon as my part of Octavia was concluded, which was in the fourth act, without staying to undress, to shew my readiness to obey her Grace's commands, I threw a cloak around me, and went into the stage-box where her Grace was, and placed myself, as she directed, behind her.

My being seated in so conspicuous a point of view, behind a lady who was looked up to as one of the first characters in the kingdom, as well for her extraordinary qualities, as for her title, attracted the attention of the whole house. Mr. Quin, as he afterwards informed me, notwithstanding he well knew her Grace's partiality for me, never experienced a more agreeable surprize than when he saw me thus situated. It is necessary you should know that her Grace was at this time disgusted with the court, upon account of her favourite, *Gay*.

Upon her Grace's quitting the box, there was an universal applause; which would have sent her home in great good humour (for she was still fond of these tokens of public approbation) had not the ensuing scene, to which her curiosity led her, justly given her Grace offence. Having ushered the Dutchess behind the scenes, upon my opening the green-room door, such a scene presented itself as I had never been witness to before. As it was usual for many persons of the first rank

rank to meet in the green-room after the play, and amuse themselves with playing at *Woman or Head*, against the chimney-piece, at which thousands were sometimes won and lost in an evening, I expected to find that the performers had retired, and that none but quality were there. Instead of which the first thing that struck our view was the Fair Egyptian Queen, with a pot of porter in her hand, crying out, "Confusion to all order. Let Liberty thrive." The table was surrounded by suitable company, and covered with mutton pies.

The Dutcheis had entered with the greatest good humour impressed on her countenance, and all the dignity annexed to her high station. — Judge then what her Grace's feelings must be at beholding such a contrast to what she had been taught to expect; such a specimen of green-room wit and politeness. She stood for some moments in a state of amazement. Nor was her introducers in a less unpleasant situation. At length recovering herself a little, she exclaimed, "Is hell broke loose?" Then turning about, she hurried to her chair, to appearance more dead than alive. As her Grace left me, she gave me a strict injunction not to return back to that room, and to be with her the next morning. Could any thing have happened more mal-a-propos; or have given her Grace

so disgusting an idea of the inside of a theatre?

The following day, the Dutchess received me with civility, but at the same time there was something in her manner that was by no means pleasing.—Softness and delicacy ought to be the distinguishing characteristics of the female sex.—And these qualities have been sometimes happily blended in minds with Roman fortitude and Amazonian courage—Without them, the most brilliant qualifications lose their most attractive graces.—Her Grace enquired whether I lived with the actors? A question which seemed to imply, that she considered actors and actresses in no better light than gypsies; and that we were only separated from each other in our most retired hours, by a blanket. I however endeavoured to convince her Grace, that those who trod the stage held the mirror of virtue, and whilst they entertained, furnished the mind with instructions; being in every respect very different from those impostors who played upon the weaker part of mankind.

Her Grace smiled at these distinctions, and thus retorted on me: “Why really
“by what I saw last night, I should imagine that if there is any difference, it lies
“in favour of the Norwood Diviners.” From this decision against us, I found that my assertions

fections had made but very little impression on her Graces's mind ; and I was obliged to give up the cause I had undertaken. Indeed I could not pretend to excuse the *levity* which had given her Grace too much reason to establish such a conjecture. I cannot however miss the opportunity this incident offers, to observe, how cautious every woman ought to be, not to give the least appearance of offence to decency ; and could wish to recommend the following lines to my own sex, requesting, at the same time, that they would impress them strongly on their memory, and join them with their daily orisons.

Come *Decency*, celestial maid,
Descend from heaven to beauty's aid.

My friend and adviser, Mr. Quin, fixed upon "The Double Dealer," for my benefit. A play replete with wit, and not *unexceptionable* for its levity, to call it by no harsher name. The same patronesses, however, who had honoured me with their presence at my first benefit, and who were esteemed the brightest patterns of virtue in the whole kingdom, graced the boxes that night. So flattering a proof of distinction gave me the greatest pleasure. And the more so, as Lord Tyrawley seemed for the *first time* to enjoy so singular a mark of public approbation.

The emoluments which accrued from my benefit were not so considerable as those of my preceding night. For this there appeared two evident reasons. The first was, that those who encouraged me whilst I was considered as a young performer, did not think their assistance so necessary now I was established, especially as I had since found a protector in Lord Tyrawley. The second was, that the gentlemen were kept at a distance by a belief that Mr. Metham was a favoured lover. It is true his Lordship afforded me some pecuniary assistance; but as for any other, he wore a short sword very quietly by his side, except when called upon to draw it in defence of his King and country. And as to the latter, appearances are not always to be trusted to.

I am now about to recall to my memory, the first step I have reason to look back upon with real regret. For although some of the past scenes of my life may be deemed imprudent, and led me into many inconveniencies, yet no lasting bad effects flowed from them, and the scandal which attended them was unmerited and transient.—Would I could say the same of that which is to furnish a subject for my next letter.—But I will not anticipate.—The corrosive reflections due to my errors will arise fast enough as I proceed.

G. A. B.

LETTER

LETTER XXXVI.

Aug. 2, 17--.

A FEW nights after my benefit, Lord Tyrawley came into the room smiling, and said, with pleasure sparkling in his eyes, "Pop, I have got you a husband!" I replied, "I then hope my Lord you have found out my choice." I had no sooner said this, than his Lordship's countenance was in an instant clouded.—And after a pause (not like a pause in music, when art can reach to no higher a pitch of harmony; it was rather a pause productive of a crash of discord) his Lordship assumed just such a look as I suppose he should have done if he had been about to face an enemy. He then threw a letter upon the table with an air of a Bajazet; saying at the same time, "There, read that.—I have given my word, which I will not break for you nor the whole world; therefore no trifling; for I will be obeyed." Having pronounced this dreadful sentence, he hopped off as fast as he could to his chair, leaving me to read the letter at my leisure.

Had his Lordship insisted in the same authoritative manner upon my taking the man of my choice, I believe in my heart I should have refused him. My temper could never brook compulsion. And though no

person can more approve of obedience and subordination, in all cases where it is due, than myself; yet were not the orders for the observance of these to be issued *in gentle terms*, I should certainly act retrograde to them.

The letter his Lordship threw on the table was from Crump. By the tenor of which I found that every thing had been settled relative to my marriage with him, before his Lordship left Dublin. He therein further informs my Lord, that he was to be in town the next evening, and intended himself the honour of meeting his Lordship at my apartments in Tavistock-street. He adds, that he had delivered his Lordship's letter to Captain Johnson, who said he was much concerned to lose his Lordship's agency, but the occasion was a sufficient excuse.

At first I was going to wish my mother joy of the success of her scheme; but on consideration, I thought it better to say nothing about it till I had acquainted Mr. Metham with it. I accordingly sat down with a mind agitated with indignation, instead of its being depressed with grief; and wrote him a letter from which he could have no room to doubt his being the entire master of my affections. 'Tis true I had already given him reason to believe this, by admitting his addresses as I had done; but I never before acknowledged to him the real state of my heart.

The

The alternate joy and grief which my letter occasioned in his mind, robbed him for a time, as he has since informed me, of recollection. Till at length his anger was aroused at the thoughts of my being treated with so much indignity. For my own part, the resentment I felt prevented tears from flowing, as they otherwise would have done. My face was therefore properly enlightened with that spirit of disdain which was suited to the character of Lady Fanciful in "The Provoked Wife," which I was to play the same evening. And the presence of Mr. Crump in the front row of the pit, who was the first object that struck my eyes, proved an additional incitement towards keeping my anger alive.

Poor Metham stood behind the scenes, though naturally too florid for a fine gentleman, as pale and dejected as if he had been the disappointed lover instead of the favoured one. The person who performed the part of lady Brute, and who had before made observations on our conduct, attributed this dejection to some love quarrel, especially as he did not follow me as usual into the green-room.

We are now arrived at the most important crisis of my fate; the moment which was to determine the tenor of my future life. The die was to be thrown, and my happiness to be the stake.—My heart flutters at

the recollection.—But I will endeavour to fill it, and proceed.—At the beginning of the fifth act, as I was crossing the back of the scenes, in order to go on the stage from the opposite side, Mr. Metham met me, and conjured me to let him speak one word with me *in the hall*. As the prompter never rings the bell for the music to cease till he sees all those who are to begin the act ready to go on, I complied for a moment with his request. But I was no sooner got without the door, than he caught me up in his arms, and hurrying through the passage, placed me in a coach that his valet had ready to receive me.

At first I was so surprised at the unexpected *enlevement*, that I could not recollect myself. And when my scattered senses resumed their powers, I candidly acknowledge, that my love for the dear youth was so well established, that I was neither sorry nor offended at the step he had taken. But the mind of my enamoured Strephon was agitated by other sensations. He was so apprehensive of incurring my displeasure by such a desperate mode of proceeding, that the florid colour which usually glowed on his cheeks now entirely forsook them. Finding me, however, not so displeased as he expected, the apprehensions that had chilled his blood, gave way to warmer ideas, and more agreeable agitations.

The

The coach soon set us down at a ready furnished house in Leicester-street, Leicester-fields; where I was immediately supplied with necessary apparel by Mrs. Studwick, the mistress of it—The audience at the theatre, as I afterwards learnt, being out of all patience at so unusual a continuation of the music, made the noise they generally do upon such occasions. This called Mr. Quin from his dressing-room, which lay contiguous to the stage, to enquire the reason of it. Lady Fanciful was repeatedly called, but no Lady Fanciful answered.—It was now found that a real rape (if a running away with, where there is no resistance, might be so termed) had interrupted the progress of the play. Nothing remained to be done, but to acquaint the house with what had unexpectedly happened. Mr. Quin accordingly, in the character of Sir John Brute, which he was performing, made an apology to the audience, by informing them, that he was come to beg their excuse for the fantastical girl of quality, whose company they would unfortunately be disappointed of at the conclusion of the piece, as she had left Heart-free, upon finding an admirer ** that was made on purpose for her.*

** Alluding to what Lady Fanciful says in the 1st scene.*

Terror, love, and resentment, which ruled by turns in my heart, banished reflection for some time. But it soon returned with accumulated force. One moment I blamed myself for yielding to the ardour of my lover, and the impulse of my affection; the next I was angry with myself for suffering the least doubt of his honour to interrupt my present delirium. I now was become a topic for numberless paragraphs in the public prints. But Mrs. Woffington, as I have already informed you, through her good wishes to me, had anticipated that surprize which the event would otherwise have occasioned.

An attempt to gain the forgiveness of Lord Tyrawley, would have been attended with as great a prospect of success, as to remove the Colossus from Rhodes to a distant country, at the time it was standing. His Lordship, who had still an eye for beauty, had enlisted under the banner of the lady just mentioned. A circumstance that seemed likely to render a reconciliation the less attainable.

Some doubts being now cleared away, which Mr. Metham had harboured with respect to my regard for him, his fondness for me was carried to the most extravagant pitch. He introduced me to his sister, Mrs. Dives, and to all his friends; and from the tender respect he shewed me, joined to the most unremitted attention, every one seemed con-

convinced that he intended to make me his wife.

My mother, from being one of the *pure ones*, had changed her religion to that of a *methodist*; and being regenerated, was become too immaculate for me to hope that my error would meet with pardon from her. I wrote to Miss O'Hara, who immediately brought me my cloaths and ornaments. But my mother thinking I should have no occasion for money, now I had chosen a protector for myself, very prudently kept that to console herself with, during my absence. I was in hopes that gaining me a father-in-law, would have been a consequence of my elopement; but Mr. Crump, I found, returned to Ireland without a wife, and Captain Johnson still continued to act as agent to Lord Tyrawley.

Mr. Quin had always been averse to the proposal made me by my Lord of marrying Crump; but his Lordship, judging from his own disposition and conduct, of his motive, had told him, that he supposed his opposition proceeded from his being interested; which silenced this best of friends, and prevented his ever after renewing the topic. He wrote to me, and indeed, informed me, that though he could not at present wait on me, in compliment to his Lordship, he would pay me a visit in the summer, when he supposed we should go into Yorkshire.

My beloved acquaintance, Miss St. Leger,

Leger, was now oftener with me than ever; she being privately courted by Major Burton, Mr. Metham's most intimate friend. This lady favoured me with her company and countenance the more readily, as the Major had assured her that his friend fully intended to marry me. An assurance which quieted my apprehensions relative to that wished-for event, for the present. And the high opinion I had of Mr. Metham's honour, confirmed my hopes. But unfortunately for us both, I was not acquainted with his caprice. — The woman who trusts her fame to the honour of a man, has not only the chances arising from satiety against her, but she has likewise much to fear from his *sickleness of disposition*; a foible natural to nine-tenths of the sex. And when to these is added the fear of that ridicule and contempt which custom has annexed to a *post-marriage* (if I may so term it) the probability is much against her ever finding the honour she trusted to, genuine. “At “lovers perjuries they say, Jove laughs,” exclaims the great dramatic developer of human nature, supposing the belief of the axiom to be universally established. And if the vows of lovers are not, at the time, made with this reservation; satiety, caprice, or shame, whisper the unfettered swain to take advantage of it. — Exceptions, I believe, there are; but these, I fear, will be found to be but few.

G. A. B.

L E T-

LETTER XXXVII.

August 15, 17—.

IN a short time we went to York. Here Mr. Metham took an elegant house of Mr. Strickland. The reason of this gentleman's leaving it was on account of his having just lost his lady, and with her a good estate. His affection not suffering her to be waked during her illness, to sign some deed which was necessary, an estate that belonged to her went away at her decease. This determined him to go abroad, to lament the loss he had sustained.

The garden wall of our new house joined to a monastery; and the ground on which the house and garden stood, had formerly belonged to it. This was a great object to me, and I soon found it a source of great comfort. For though my lover's fondness was unabated; his numberless friends, and likewise his father, who lived forty miles from the city in which we resided, claimed so much of his company that I had very little of it. Being a keen sportsman, he was also very intimate with Lord Downe. So that, except during the race week, I scarcely saw any human being but the servants.

I therefore esteemed myself exceedingly fortunate, in commencing an acquaintance with the chaplain of the adjacent seminary.

This

This gentleman I found to be an honour to the sacerdotal function. For learning and good sense, there were very few who exceeded him. And he preferred the quiet of the retirement he was now situated in, to any preferment he could attain in the busy world. To his kind instructions was I indebted for a return of those sentiments I had early imbibed in my loved cloister at Boulogne.—Sentiments replete with peace and satisfaction.—*Religion* is the only rock on which the wearied restless mind can safely anchor, amidst the impetuous billows of this fluctuating life.—If, now and then, the gentle breath of Zephyrus wafts us towards the wished-for shore, the prosperous gale is but short-lived, and soon dies away. The ruder and more lasting blasts of Boreas succeed, and drive the unmanageable bark into all the dangers of the tempestuous deep.

The ladies belonging to the seminary, at first objected to my visits, as my character was doubtful; but when I informed Mr. Blunt, which was the name of the chaplain, that I had not the least doubt but that Mr. Metham's honour, which had never been questioned, and his affection for me, would induce him to make me honourable amends for the disgraceful cloud in which he had for the present shrouded me, I readily procured admittance among them. I could have added, that a more forcible inducement for the
per-

performance of his promise, was about to take place, than even either of these; and that was the probability of my presenting him with his *picture in miniature*; an event that he expressed the most earnest desire of seeing accomplished.

The acquaintance I thus formed with this society, soon increased to a cordial intimacy. The ladies joined to an exemplary piety, a cheerfulness which is always a sure attendant on innocence and virtue; and their company soon became a source of happiness to me, which compensated, in some degree, for the long absence of the man I loved. *In some degree*, I say; for though prudery and affectation may wish to throw a veil over our passions, I must candidly acknowledge, that to a soul dissolved by that sweet, and as yet unalloyed intercourse, that fervent love, which subsisted between Metham and myself, every other enjoyment afforded but a substituted satisfaction, and would not stand in competition with it.

Upon the terrace of our garden there remained a door which led into that of the convent. This door, with the consent of the community, I ordered to be opened; which procured me the happiness of two or three of the ladies company, attended by the old gentleman, (who, with the wisdom of age, still retained the good humour and sprightliness of youth) as often as a due attendance

to

to the concerns of my family would admit; and whenever Mr. Metham's absence rendered some companions needful.

These absences now became more frequent than usual; the Marquis of Rockingham, the Earls of Burlington and Scarborough, and Lord Downe, sharing his visits by turns. Grouse shooting claimed his attention in Autumn, and hunting in winter. So that during the seven months we resided in Trinity-lane, York, I may with safety affirm, that he was not at home for seven weeks, put his returns all together. It is true, he wrote to me constantly during his absences, and his letters glowed with affection and sincerity; but I could not help at last remarking, that they bordered too much on adulation.

I must here, by way of relief to the rapid continuation of my tale, entertain you with a droll circumstance, which happened in the race week, and into which I was led by the remains of my natural vanity. A nobleman, who had a horse to run for the plate at York races, was at our house for some days. As his Lordship was intitled by his rank to the seat of honour, he of course, during dinner, sat at my right hand. But I could not help observing, that his eye was constantly and steadily fixed upon me. I took little notice of it at first, thinking it was occasioned by the attractive power of my charms, and that good manners would in time induce his Lordship

Lordship to behave with more decorum. Seeing, however, that my face was still the chief object to which his eye was directed, I grew much disconcerted and abashed. But having, at length, recovered from the little prudery I had contracted in Ireland, I complained to Mr. Metham of the rudeness of his friend. He could not avoid smiling whilst I made my complaint; and, as a perfect acquittal of his Lordship from any design to offend me, he informed me, that the eye which had been always so steadily fixed upon me, and excited my alarms, was only an innocent *glass* eye, and therefore could not convey any improper information; as it was immoveable all day, and rested at night very quietly upon the table. My vanity received a check by the incident, and I joined in the laugh which it had occasioned.

On the sixth of December I was taken so ill, that the nurse who had been some time with me, declared it to be my labour. Mr. Metham was then at Ferry-bridge, but was immediately sent for. On his return, he insisted upon sending for a man-midwife; but this I would by no means agree to. My false modesty here visited me a second time. And, as at first, it had prevented me from clearing up my reputation after being carried off by the Earl of —, so now it had like to have cost me my life. For the apprehensions arising from my delicacy, prompted

prompted me to smother my pains, till my life was in danger; which in the end brought on a forced labour, and obliged me to have recourse to that assistance I had strove to avoid.

It is a matter of great surprize to me, that as female practitioners in midwifery are in general inexpert, women defer having an *accoucheur*, till necessity obliges him to be called in. Those who, out of a mistaken modesty, do this, not only risk the lives of themselves and infants, but, if difficulties render it necessary that a doctor should be called in, are informed by it of their danger, at a time when no addition ought to be made to their terror. And if, through their continued obstinacy, their lives should be lost, they are, in my opinion, guilty of self-murder.

The eleventh day of my illness, my ever regretted George Metham, first saw the light; and, I may truly say, *blest* me, in making me the mother of a man child; as his loss afterwards not only deprived me of a good child, but of a sincere and affectionate friend; and had death spared him, he would now, I doubt not, have made my old age comfortable.

Mr. Metham was like a distracted man till I was pronounced to be out of danger. He had wrote to my mother to intreat her to come to York on account of my illness; which,

which, to our mutual surprize, she consented to. And to her presence I attribute in a great measure, my recovering so soon as I did. After her arrival, she never let my lover have a moment's peace, whenever they were together, till he promised to make me his wife. And as he was a man of unblemished honour, she rested perfectly satisfied with this declaration, and was reconciled to me.

She now transferred all her attention and tenderness to my little boy. Of this she gave a most striking proof, by suffering him to sleep in the same bed with her, when he had taken the small pox, notwithstanding she had never had that dreadful disorder, and was very apprehensive of it. As the nurse that suckled her little grandson was young, and consequently inclined to heaviness, she took this affectionate step to prevent any disagreeable consequences that might arise from her negligence.

G. A. B.

 L E T T E R X X X V I I I .

August 24, 17—.

ABOUT this time I received a letter from Mr. Quin, apologizing for not having kept his promise in paying me a visit during the

the summer. He at the same time informed me, that although it was so late in the season, he desired I would make all possible haste to London, as he had obtained an engagement for me, which would compensate for Mr. Rich's behaviour the preceding winter. He told me that the proprietor had agreed to give me seven pounds a week with a free benefit; and that my salary was to commence from the opening of the house.

Mr. Metham who had stayed at home from the beginning of my illness, began now to find York very dull. He therefore languished to be in London; and wished me to accept of the offer. I made use of all the arguments in my power to prevail on him to suffer me to remain in a retirement where I was so happy; and where we could live genteely upon the most reasonable terms. Though till our settling at York, I had never been accustomed to the management of a family, I had applied with so much industry to acquire a knowledge of it, and was become such an oeconomist, that our weekly expences did not exceed three guineas.

But neither the reasons I could urge, nor even that power I once flattered myself I had acquired over his heart, could now avail. Fortunate would it have been for us both had I succeeded. But fate decreed it otherwise. And I was reserved to suffer calamities, of which had it been possible for
me

me to have acquired a foreknowledge the very apprehension would have broken my heart; and prevented the completion of them.—Happy is it for mortals that they are not endowed with a prescience of their future destiny.—The prospect in general would prove so gloomy, that it would make them wish for their dissolution, and too often tempt them to precipitate it.—Small evils would be magnified, by being viewed through the alarming perspective, to insurmountable ones; and every pleasure lost in the succeeding pain.—We are therefore truly blest in this ignorance.

We did not set off for town till the beginning of February, having been prevented by my weakness from undertaking the journey before. And the waters happening to be out as we proceeded, this gave me some further time to recover strength. On our arrival we went to a ready-furnished house in Lisle-street, Leicester-fields, which had been taken for us; where I found two or three notes from Mr. Quin, who had expected me for several days. Soon after we were set down, I sent to inform him that I was arrived, and he immediately answered my message in person.

When congratulations were over, he said, it was with the most singular pleasure he could inform me, that since my return to the stage had been publickly announced, there
had

had been continual enquiries about me, and the boxes taken for many nights. He added, that he was concerned he had made the agreement for me, though he thought it a good one *at the time*. But the eager desire of the public to see me, gave him reason to think that had he not engaged his word, I might have made my own terms. He further acquainted me that Lord Tyrawley was gone to Ireland.

This intelligence relative to his Lordship gave me pleasure, as I was sensible that there was but little probability of my obtaining his forgiveness. Especially as he had lately declared to Mr. Quin, that if Metham married me, he would never be reconciled to *him*, though he would not say he could totally forget *me*. As I was no stranger to his Lordship's inflexibility, I was the less anxious about him.

Steadiness of disposition is certainly a commendable virtue.—And on the contrary, instability is the greatest weakness of human nature.—Having maturely weighed the tendency and propriety of any determination, if it be agreeable to that rectitude we ought never to lose sight of, no inducement whatever, when it is once made, should prevail on us to deviate from it.

By adhering to this exalted magnanimity, the heroes of Sparta and Rome immortalized their names; whilst the great men of Egypt and

and Asia acquired but little glory through their slothful instability. — That these are the real sentiments of my mind, I have evinced upon many occasions. This firmness has been even productive of all the wants I have experienced. I, however, can most solemnly affirm, that I never regretted my perseverance in a resolution which some years after deprived me at once of all the elegancies of life; of respect; of envy upon account of my supposed happy situation; and likewise, of something more than common praise from those who honoured me with their intimacy. — Judging of my veracity from the frankness with which I acknowledge my errors, I flatter myself you will favour me with your belief of this assertion.

This topic of *perseverance* brings to my memory a conversation which once passed between the Honourable Charles Townsend and myself on the subject, and which, for the sake of the singular anecdote it contains, I shall beg leave to repeat here. That gentleman regretting *my* want of stability, he told me it was happy for the country I lived in, that my mind was not inclined to mischief; for if it was, I might prove as dangerous a member of society as the once admired Comtesse de ———, who was put to the torture on the Grieve at Lyons, for poisoning her *eldest* son, that the *younger*, for whom she had

a greater affection, might inherit the family title and estates.

After having suffered the torture of the rack herself, the Comtesse was seated in a chair on the scaffold, whilst her son underwent the same punishment in order to extort a confession from him; and she beheld the agonies of her darling child with such amazing fortitude and composure, that the spectators not only thought her guiltless, but in all probability would have canonized her, had not the son at last pleaded guilty. Having done this, he was taken from the rack and placed close by his mother, till he should be so far recovered as to be able to relate the particulars of their crime. When, to the astonishment and terror of the surrounding multitude, the Comtesse drew a knife which she had secreted, and stuck it into the heart of her child; saying at the same time, with an audible voice and unaltered countenance, “** Meurs, fils! indigne d’une telle mere!*” So great was the general consternation at this sudden and resolute act, that the executioner had not presence of mind sufficient to prevent her from plunging the same weapon, which was reeking with the blood of her favourite boy, into her own bosom.—The relation of this story filled my mind with horror. Nor was I very well pleased with the application of it;

* Die, son, unworthy of such a mother.

as I was conscious, that however determined I usually was in a good cause, my disposition was so humane, that I would not willingly hurt a fly.

When I made my appearance at the theatre, my success was greater than even my most sanguine hopes, or Mr. Quin's conversation, gave me reason to expect. This caused the beautiful Mrs. Woffington to burst with envy, as she had now left the sock for the buskin.

My being obliged to play so often, before I was perfectly recovered from my late indisposition, so much affected my health, that I was pronounced to be in what is usually termed a galloping consumption. Mr. Quin having a great partiality for Doctor Thompson, to him I had recourse for advise. This son of *Æsculapius* obtained a knowledge of the science of physic by intuition; and though he had not received the assistance of a regular education, his practice was attended with very great success: which was the more mortifying to the regular bred professors.

Doctor Thompson's was an eccentric character, but a pleasing one. His oddities rendered him somewhat similar to that of Sterne's uncle Toby, only their hobby-horses were of a different nature. The singularity of his disposition, joined to the opinion he entertained of his skill, induced the great Mr. Winnington to give him an invitation to live in the

house with him ; which added not a little to the illiberal abuse, and scurrilous denominations, that were bestowed upon him. Doctor Thompson, however, in a short time restored me to health, and Mr. Metham to his senses, who had been almost distracted, and continually reproaching himself as the cause of my indisposition, by persuading me, against my inclination, to come to town.

Mr. Quin had for some time entertained a dislike to Mrs. Woffington, which now increased, as I no longer fought her battles with him. And upon his refusing to grant a request at her benefit, which he thought unreasonable, she was illiberal enough to say something disrespectful of his mother ; who had been many years in the grave. The old gentleman, irritated by so unwarrantable an attack, told her in the public green room, that it would be wronging the ashes of the dead to call her Sarah Malcomb. All the gentlemen present, even to her own admirers, laughed at the appellation bestowed upon her ; for, from a person so famed for wit as Mr. Quin, every trifle passes as such, and is supposed deserving of a laugh. Stamp but the effigy of a prince upon lead, and it passes current.

Mrs. Woffington, besides her allowed beauty and figure, had certainly a strong natural understanding ; but it was uncultivated. She seemed to build her fame for wit upon what

is vulgarly called *Blackguardism*. Having given offence to Mr. Quin, she was led to believe that he would prove an inveterate enemy to her. A superficial knowledge of that great and good man might lead a person into such an error ; but a more intimate acquaintance with his disposition would convince them that he was incapable of rancour. His sentiments, though hid under the rough manner he had assumed, would have done honour to his own *Cato* ; for, by all accounts, he exceeded the original*.

By an inattention to the *actions* of a man can we alone judge of his real character.—Under a stern countenance and morose manners, is often found, as in the instance before us, a benevolent, humane, and honest heart.—Whilst the smile, the bow, the squeeze by the hand, the ready promise, and all the grimace of affected courtesy, too frequently conceal the dark designing, avaricious, unfeeling villain.—But however pleasing the more specious demeanour of the latter may be, one ounce of plain sincerity of the former (to make use of a proverbial phrase) is worth a pound of it.

The situation of Mrs. Woffington being rendered uneasy, by the jealousy of her lover at home, and the anxiety of the one abroad ;

* Mr. Booth, to whom each party, wishing to have him of their side, made uncommon presents.

and at the theatre, by the envy of her own mean mind, and her disappointment from Melpomene's refusal to admit her as a favourite ; she took dudgeon, and set off for Dublin ; where her beauty alone would insure her success.

G. A. B.

LETTER XXXIX.

Aug. 31, 17—.

AT the approach of my benefit, I received a card from Miss Conway, desiring me to attend at Leicester-house the next day, as their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales intended me the honour of a command upon my night. So flattering a distinction, you may be assured, was highly pleasing to me ; and I was happy in obeying the mandate.

Whilst I was there, I was witness to a mark of the most distinguished *innate* good breeding I ever saw. Her Grace the Duchess of Chandos had been lately introduced at court. This lady was beautiful to a degree ; but as the Duke had elevated her from the lowest obscurity to his bed and title, no great expectations were to be formed of her politeness or accomplishments. But natural endowments sometimes atone for the want of these ; of which this instance is a proof. The
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fun happened to shine full upon her Royal Highness, and appeared to be rather troublesome. Upon which, the Duchess, with a grace which would have done honour to a lady born and bred in a court, crossed the drawing-room, with the greatest ease let down the lattice, and returned to her place.—The considerateness of the thought, and the elegance of her Grace's manner as she carried it into execution, made an impression at the time on my mind, and established in it a favourable opinion of her deportment ever after.

The play chose by their Royal Highnesses, was "The Siege of Damascus;" in which Mr. Quin was uncommonly capital in the character of Caled. So much so, indeed, was he, that he seemed actually to enjoy his *prophet's paradise* whilst on earth. Unfortunately for myself, as well as the public, his Royal Highness was taken ill before the night of my benefit arrived, and in a few days expired. The theatre of course was shut up for some time, and the benefits protracted. This occasioned the house to continue open longer than usual.

Mr. Metham's love of play grew more violent every day; and my being so much at the theatre, gave him the more frequent opportunities to indulge this propensity, as it prevented him from staying at home. At the conclusion of the season, I retired to a small

house at Knightsbridge, and he went into Yorkshire, where my mother had continued with my little George. The Honourable Mr. Brudenell, who was an intimate friend of Mr. Metham's, was kind enough to supply me with what money I had occasion for during his absence. This was not a very large sum, as I saw but little company, having no acquaintances in town.

But Mr. Metham having met with more success at play, during his excursion into the country, than he expected, he came to town sooner than he intended, and took a large house in King-street, St. James's. He then set up an equipage, and lived in a style, that twice his fortune was not adequate to. Our house soon became the resort of all the young people of fashion in town; and as Mrs. Dives's family visited me, the ladies with whom I had been acquainted before my connection with Mr. Metham, made no objection to renew their visits.

At this period, the famous contested election between Lord Trentham and Sir George Vandeput was carried on with the greatest party zeal ever known. And a company of French players having come over to exhibit at the little theatre in the Hay-market, his Lordship's patronizing them raised a popular clamour against him; and it was made a motive for keeping up the opposition longer than it otherwise would have been. I, as well

well as most of my acquaintance, was as anxious for the success of his Lordship, as if the fate of the nation depended upon it. I sent a servant every half hour to the hustings, to enquire how the poll went on ; to which an answer was returned me by Captain Shaftoe, or some of the gentlemen on the same side of the question. I gave public breakfasts on the occasion. And though, to the best of my knowledge, I had never seen his Lordship, yet I was as warmly interested for him, as if I had been honoured with his friendship.

I must here stop a minute or two, as I usually do when any incident excites reflections in my mind, just to make a few remarks on the party zeal I have been giving an account of.—During a contested election, how many are there whose principles are built upon no wiser a foundation than my own ; merely upon accident !—Biassed by interested friends, influenced by popular clamour, or perhaps excited by less substantial reasons, people rush headlong into the contest ; and then farewell to reason and moderation. Prejudices are now entertained ; intimacies dissolved ; and the dearest friends, if they happen to differ in sentiment, know one another no longer.—The colour of a ribbon can give birth to the most uncharitable ideas. The wearer of it, though a perfect stranger, is supposed to possess every bad quality, and

deserving of Bridewell, if not of the flames.—Drunkennes, riot, noise, confusion, maims, wounds, and murder, are too often the consequences of these party feuds.—And all for what? The choice of a person for a representative, who, perhaps, the moment his election is gained, does not care a straw for you or your whole generation; and who, as soon as he enters the doors of St. Stephen's Chapel, deserts the very cause you had been so zealous to support.—Zeal, tempered by moderation, is undoubtedly allowable on these occasions; but when carried to extremes, is deserving of censure.—The foregoing observations, I own, do not well become the pen of a woman; but as my own conduct has given rise to them, and truth cannot come amiss from any pen, I will e'en hazard them.

During the election, the following ludicrous event happened, which I doubt not, will afford you the same entertainment it did me. Mr. St. Leger, the gentleman I mentioned in a former letter, who behaved with such impropriety to me at the theatre, being just returned from his travels, came to pay me a morning visit. With a good understanding, a fine figure, and a handsome face, he had in his manner a good deal of the *coxcomb*, which had received no little addition from his having made the grand tour.

tour. Indeed he was as highly finished as the fine gentleman in "Lethe."

As I never enter into any concern that I interest myself in by halves, but pursue it with my whole attention, my impatience one morning carried me to the window, to see if the Mercury I had dispatched to the hustings, was upon his return; when, who should I see at the extremity of the street, but Mr. St. Leger, accoutred as the complete fine gentleman. He had on a white furtout, with a crimson cape, a French waistcoat, his hair *en papillote*, a feather in his hat, a couteau de chasse by his side with a small cane hanging to his button, and attended by two Italian greyhounds.

As he came nearly opposite the house, espying me at the window, he called out to me, "*Bonne nouvelle ! Bonne nouvelle !*" A scavenger's cart being close by, the fellows left their employment to look at this phenomenon. When viewing him with great earnestness one of them cried to the other, "Tom ! smoke Mr. Red heels." Mr. St. Leger, who possessed as much personal courage, with proportionable strength, as any man in England, no sooner heard this insult, than stepping to the fellow, he caught him up, and fairly chucked him into his own cart. Having done this, he walked in with a *sang froid*, that was not to be expected in the coolest mind after such an adventure.

He then joined my company, who had been highly entertained by the incident, with the same composure.

After enquiries relative to the election, which possessed the first place in our thoughts and of our success in which he brought the joyful tidings, Mr. St. Leger told us among other laughable stories, the following adventure, which had befallen him the night before. Being in the front boxes at Drury-lane theatre, he remarked that Woodward (having seen him in the Park, as he afterwards found) had dressed a character he appeared in, exactly in the same suit he then had on. Just under him, in the pit, sat a lion,* (as he expressed himself) with a cauliflower wig on; who being amazed at the similitude, with all the honest simplicity of a citizen, looked first at the actor, and then at him, with an expression of astonishment in his countenance, that displeased the travelled gentleman. St. Leger, therefore, without any hesitation, told him, that if he turned his head round once more, he would resent it in a manner that should not be very pleasing to him.

The gaping citizen, however, persisting, St. Leger, with the same *nonchalance* he had just given us a specimen of in the affair with the dustman, snatched off his pompous wig,

* A term at that time in vogue for a cit.

and flung it on the stage; saying aloud at the same time, "I give that fellow you see *there*," (pointing to Woodward) "leave to take me off; but let me tell you, friend, that no tallow-chandler or soap-boiler shall divert himself at my expence, with impunity." Honest John Bull was much grieved to see his church-going wig treated with so much indignity; and would have resented the affront; but being informed that he had mistaken his man, and that instead of the puppy he had supposed him, from his dress, to be, his antagonist was the fighting St. Leger, he very quietly covered his pate with his pocket handkerchief, to the inexpressible entertainment of those around him; and sitting down, waited very patiently till the conclusion of the piece, for the recovery of his wig, which had thus suffered for its master's impertinence.—As soon as the play was over, Mr. St. Leger went behind the scenes, with the same unconcern, and taking the actor, who had personated him, kindly by the hand, only said, "Ah Woodward! you have been very quick upon me!"

The gaining our election, joined to this gentleman's sallies, which had the appearance of wit, put the whole company into great good humour. To the foregoing story he added a very pleasant relation of his travels, and recounted numberless instances
in

in which he had met with hair-breadth escapes.

From him I learnt that his sister's ill-state of health made it necessary for her to go to the south of France, to which Lord and Lady Doneraile had accompanied her. This was a great mortification to me, as I really loved her, and had been long honoured with her confidence. I recollected with pleasure our little parties in the attic story of Lord Doneraile's house in Soho-square. They were much talked of that time, and very great interest was made by many men of fashion to Miss Conway and myself, to get them admitted to those festive parties.

I had prevailed upon Miss St. Leger before she went abroad, to consult Doctor Thompson, who had proved successful in restoring me to health, when I was afflicted with the same complaint. But the unfortunate event of Mr. Winnington's death, prevented it from being practicable. This great man, during his illness, obstinately persisted in not having any other advice than that of his favourite Thompson, lest the regular physicians should refuse to act with him. He at length died; and his death made a very great noise, as from his being a real patriot, his loss was a public concern. The physicians made no scruple of charging his death to the ignorance of Thompson. This accusation, united with the chagrin occasioned by the decease
of

of his friend, was too much for his sensibility to bear. They turned his brain. And I had the unhappiness to hear that my restorer had left this envious world to join his patron. An event which gave great joy to the legitimate sons of *Æsculapius*; who had every reason to fear, from his extensive knowledge and unexampled success, (it scarcely having ever failed but in the melancholy instance just mentioned) a considerable decrease in their practice.

G. A. B.

LETTER XL.

Sept. 8, 17—.

THE expences which Mr. Metham had injudiciously fallen into, involved him not a little, and rendered it necessary for him to revisit York. He had introduced to me an amiable French nobleman, the Marquis de Vernieul; and likewise Madam Brilliant, one of the performers that came over in the French troop, conducted by Monsieur Monnet, which had been treated with so little urbanity by the mobility.

I had now contracted a taste for expence; and without considering that I was not intitled to gratify it equally with the persons

of fashion with whom I was intimate, could not think of curbing the propensity.—So do habits of this nature creep and creep upon us by degrees, till they become too strong for reason and prudence to master. And nothing but the fatal consequences which naturally result from them, can restore the mind to its wonted tone.—When the stroke comes, the world takes the alarm; and censures are bestowed upon us from every quarter; without its being considered, that the infatuation has stolen upon us by imperceivable advances, clouded our perception, hoodwinked our judgement, and brought on a total blindness to the common evils.

Without having regard to the expence, I now took a house at Richmond. One inducement was, that Lord Tyrawley had lately returned to England, and resided at that delightful village. Notwithstanding I well knew his Lordship's inflexibility, as I have already observed, some glimmering hopes would now and then rise in my mind, that the regard he once had for me, would rekindle, and induce him to restore me to his favour. I had the more reason to hope this, as Mr. Metham was now absent; and his permitting his two nephews and his niece to live with me, gave the world assurance, that if I was not already his wife, he meant to make me so.

The French players were so reduced, from the little encouragement they met with, that they had nothing to subsist on. I therefore set on foot a subscription, and raised a considerable sum for them. But by a chain of disagreeable circumstances, the *Brilliant* was left in the greatest distress. I therefore complimented her with an apartment in my house in town, which she gladly accepted, till she could procure an engagement in some company in her own country.

Soon after my arrival at Richmond, I had the happiness to effect a reconciliation with Lord Tyrawley. And it was fortunate for me that I did so, as his bounty was very needful to me at this time. For notwithstanding my salary, which was a handsome one; the emoluments of my benefit, which were great; and the generosity of Mr. Metham, which was unlimited, I frequently found myself without a guinea.

A circumstance far from pleasing to a disposition like mine, to a heart susceptible of no gratification equal to that of relieving the necessities of others.—Of all the pleasures this world can bestow, that of *giving* is certainly the most exquisite and satisfactory. More real happiness results from it, than can enter into the imagination of the selfish. Like Mercy, “it is twice blessed; it blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.”

And

And if the advantage lies on either side, it is on that of the giver.—I claim, however, no merit for the little assistance I have been enabled to bestow on others. It was an impulse of nature that *I could not* resist. It was an impulse of nature that I *wished not* to resist. And though to the present hour I labour under many and great inconveniences from the indulgencies of this liberal disposition ; instead of regretting it, I bless the *great Giver*, that he has favoured me with so large a portion of his own beneficence.

The Marquis de Vernieul was lively, though one of the *Academie Royal*. Lord Tyrawley, to whom I introduced him, was much pleased with his company. And my little house in the Vineyard was always crowded. I had with me, besides my own family, the widow of Mr. Delany, and Miss Hilyard, a daughter of Lord Frederick Cavendish, who made such a proficiency in dancing, that she afterwards appeared with great eclat, upon the stage. And though she was far from handsome, she might have made her fortune, had she been inclined to enter the lists of gallantry.

It was one day proposed by the Marquis, that we should engage the assembly-room, in order to perform some French plays. This we accordingly set about. The two Miss Merediths, with whom I was still intimate, spoke French like natives ; and so did my two visitants.

fitants. These ladies, with myself, made a tolerable company, without the aid of the Marquis. But he joined us, and I likewise sent for Madam Brilliant, who completed our number; and in a short time we were able to perform *Andromache*, *Zaire*, and the *Atalia* of Racine.

Our frolick was, however, attended with no little expence. For we not only entertained the nobility and gentry with a mental feast, but to show the liberality of our dispositions, we treated them, likewise, with all the delicacies the season would produce. These we procured from London; and I was as happy in the splendor of the night, as if I had been really possessed of the power of *Athalia* to support such an expence. The Marquis paid for the room, lights, music, wine, and servants. I furnished the wardrobe, fruit, tea, &c. &c. But this was not all; for at the conclusion of the flight, by way of epilogue, I found that I had also a debt of three hundred pounds to discharge.

But I was fully repaid for the trifle this affair had cost me, by the promises of Monet; who assured me that if I would take a trip to Paris, the next summer, I should not only eclipse the Du Menil and Gosin, but even captivate the Grand Monarque himself. Notwithstanding I loved Mr. Metham, with the truest affection, and would have rejected being a second Maintenon for his sake,

sake, yet the flattering prospect of holding a sovereign in my chains, and at the same time nobly rejecting him, which I was fully determined to do, presented such a train of pleasing Ideas to my mind, that I thought the expence which insured me so much happiness a mere bagatelle.

Mr. Metham having had a bad run at Scarborough, and the year our house in King-street was taken for being elapsed, he wrote me word that he was no longer able to keep it on; and therefore desired I would quit it. He added, that as his father continued inflexible in his resolution of not supporting his extravagance, his coming to town would be uncertain. He further informed me, that he had met Mr. Garrick upon a visit at Lord Burlington's, who expressed a very great opinion of my talents, and wished to have me of his company. From all these circumstances, he advised me to take a temporary lodging, till he and Major Burton, who was with him, could raise money to extricate themselves, and come to town; from whence the Major intended to follow Miss St. Leger to the South of France.

I now, for the first time, began to think of pecuniary matters. I found myself greatly involved; and though from being under age, I had no apprehensions for my liberty, yet, my spirit was much hurt by being asked for money which I could not immediately

diately pay. My hopes of assistance from Lord Tyrawley was now at an end, as his Lordship was preparing to go to his government at Gibraltar, to which it was become necessary he should depart with all expedition, as the fortifications wanted considerable repairs. And indeed, if his Lordship had continued in England, his own love of expence would have put it out of his power to support mine.

About this period the youngest Dives, who had been some time with me was taken ill. And as I loved the children as well as my own, particularly this, he demanded all my care. My much-esteemed Miss Conway had likewise relapsed. The Marquis was gone to Scarborough to join Mr. Metham, and see that place. He was however, to return soon, when he was to bring me a recruit of cash, together with intelligence of my lover, and my dear boy, who with my mother remained still at York.

Every thing thus seemed to conspire to make me thoughtful; and as my disposition seldom retained a proper medium, but was always in the extreme, I was now near falling into a state of dejection; which my intimates were apprehensive would prove of serious consequences. When Hugh Dives recovered, I came to town, and took what is generally called a furnished house in Frith-street, Soho. What is meant by a ready furnished

furnished house, is a house with a few old chairs, tables, &c. of trifling value, but which greatly enhances the rent.

The town upon my return to London, being quite deserted, and consequently very dull, I took it into my head to go to Tunbridge to visit the estate of my progenitor Mr. Seal. I accordingly sent to have lodgings taken for me at Mount Sion; a place, which but for my grandmother's imprudent marriage, would have become in time the property of myself.

Having frequently taken notice of a genteel looking lad, although in rags, who waited upon a poor musician that lived opposite to me, I ordered O'Bryen to enquire whether he wanted a place. Being almost starved for want of food, and poisoned with dirt, the youth readily answered that he should be glad to leave his present situation. I accordingly hired him. When he came, I found that he was of Bruges in Flanders; which was all the intelligence relative to his history the servants could get out of him. But there was something so distinguished in his manner and behaviour, that notwithstanding I had engaged him to do the drudgery of the house, my own man and he shared it between them as it casually offered. The boy had not been long with me, before he shewed his gratitude for the comfortable exchange I had
offered

offered him by the most alert industry, and scrupulous attention to my wishes; and to such a height did he carry his zeal to please me, that he seemed almost to pay me divine honours.

Having formed the resolution of setting out for Tunbridge, I thought it would derogate from my consequence were I to travel with less than a set of horses. I therefore sent to Tubbs ordering him to add four bright bays to my own two; and I set off for the Wells, in my coach and six, with my own maid and two footmen. I took with me my favourite Virgil, to amuse myself on the road; and enjoying by anticipation the exquisite satisfaction I should reap from the conquest I was assuredly to make, the next summer, of so great and powerful a personage as the French King, was as great in my own imagination as the Queen of Carthage.—O vanity! vanity! with what pleasing deliriums is the mind of poor weak women too often filled by thy flattering inspirations!—But ah! how unreal and delusive are thy fairest promises!—And yet, bewitching impostor! though we are sensible that the bliss thou dost bestow is transitory, and the expectations thou dost fashion uncertain, we hug thee to our bosoms, and driving away reason and reflection, blindly encourage thy delusions.—I have your licence you know for these flights.

G. A. B.

LET-

LETTER XLI.

Sept. 13, 17—

WHEN I arrived at the Wells, I met with a mortification, which was rendered the more extreme by the vain imaginations I had given way to during my journey. A proof of the impropriety of indulging those *waking dreams*. I think I never felt so much from the most degrading circumstance of my life, as from the humiliating situation I was thrown into by it.

Mr. St. Leger, whose intimacy with Mr. Metham, and the long acquaintance that had subsisted between myself and him, placed upon terms of the utmost freedom and familiarity, was my first visitor. As soon as he entered, I ran to receive him in my usual free way; when I could not help observing that he accosted me with a cool respect, in lieu of that gaiety with which he was accustomed to approach me. Upon my enquiring the reason, he informed me, that he was paying his addresses to Miss Butler, (with whom, as related, I was formerly very intimate) and hoped in a few days to be made happy. That the occasion of his visit was a request which that lady's mother had to make to me. She intreated to know from me, begging pardon at the same time for the liberty

berty she was taking, whether I was really married to Mr. Metham, as report said: If not, although she had a very great regard for me, it would not be in the power of either herself or her daughter to take notice of me. This, he added, would be productive of a very mortifying reception at the rooms, there being a number of Irish nobility and gentry at the Wells, who had been acquainted with me at her house in Dublin, and who naturally would follow their example.

This was a thunderbolt to my vanity. I could not sustain the unexpected shock. All my vain ideas of self-consequence vanished in a moment; and I found myself a despicable wretch, unworthy the patronage of one of the best of women. As soon as I could recover myself, I thanked him for having saved me, by this timely visit, from so public a mortification as I must have experienced had I gone to the rooms. I begged he would give my respects to Mrs. Butler and her daughter, and inform them, that I was, and ever should be, truly sensible of the marks of friendship with which they had honoured me; and that I should ever retain the most grateful sense of their goodness. But that I should feel that I was unworthy of ever having been so happy, could I repay them with deception. I must therefore candidly acknowledge, that notwithstanding I

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had every reason to believe Mr. Metham would make me his wife, and he had actually given me leave to assume that character, the ceremony had not as yet passed. I added, that since upon this account I could not hope for the honour of her notice, I would immediately return to London.

Mr. St. Leger persuaded me to wait the event; as he was certain my frankness would have a much better effect, than if I had endeavoured to impose a falsehood on the ladies. He said, as there was a ball that evening, and Mrs. Butler and her daughter were there, he should not have an opportunity of making her acquainted with my *unexampled* sincerity, as he was pleased to term it, till the next morning. He gave it that epithet, he told me, because to his knowledge the deception would never have been discovered, had I chose to have made use of it; as Mr. Metham, upon such an occasion, would readily have supported me in it.

But I was resolute. And, after Mr. St. Leger's departure, the consequences of the evening fully confirmed my resolution to return to town. For some of my good friends, who had heard of my arrival, coming to see me, cards were proposed. As I wished to hide the chagrin that Mr. St. Leger's conversation had occasioned, I readily joined in the proposal; and sitting down, found, when the company broke up, that out of
two

two hundred and odd pounds I had brought down with me, I only retained twelve guineas; and out of these I had a week's lodging to pay, which amounted to half of them.

The next morning I set out on my return, with only one solitary half-guinea in my purse, and a mind still more exhausted. So humble was it, that I could not trace the least resemblance of the *Imperial Dido* in it, to whom, on my approach, I had vainly compared myself—Thus ended my adventure at Tunbridge Wells. And a most delightful one (to express myself in the true Hibernian dialect) *to be sure, it was, it was.*

On my journey back, I dined at Bromley; but when the bill was brought in, I was obliged to my hand-maid, O'Bryen, for being enabled to discharge it. This descendant from kings not only assisted me with her purse upon this occasion, but administered comfort to me; which I was equally in want of. Observing that I was much affected at what had passed at Tunbridge, which could not be concealed from her, she endeavoured to keep up my spirits, by assuring me, that she had not the least doubt, but that next summer, she should see me doubly repaid for the chagrin I had sustained there, by the reputation I should acquire in France. "For Madam," said she, "will you not then be esteemed as bright a pattern of virtue, F 2 " through

“through your rejecting the offers of so great a man as the French King? take my word for it you will.”

This well-timed observation of my faithful Irish *woman*, drove from my mind that dejection which had a few moments before overwhelmed it; and raised me in my own opinion, nearly to the same elevated pitch of consequence I had assumed during my journey down.—How happy is it for our sex, that the most humiliating impressions do not leave indelible marks on the heart!—Vanity is ever *buoyant*, and when it only soars to an allowable height, it is by no means censurable.—It then answers the noblest purposes, and is productive of the best consequences; which, without staying to enumerate them, I shall comprize in—a wish to render themselves pleasing.

I was set down in Frith-Street, the same evening, without meeting with any impediment, and without a shilling in my pocket towards paying for the four coach and two saddle horses I had thought necessary to my pomp. This, however, was a matter of little concern to me, as I could send to Mr. Brudenell for a recruit, who seldom left town, even during the summer season. I accordingly sent to him, and on my informing him of my wants, he immediately accommodated me with twenty guineas.

As my Flemish boy, Peter, was standing

ing at the door waiting for the return of the messenger I had sent to Mr. Brudenell, before whose arrival the extra horses could not be discharged, two gentlemen passed by. Upon observing the equipage, the elder of the two, addressing the other, wondered whose it was. To which my boy pertly replied, "My mistress's." Ah! returned the same gentleman, "I should be glad to know who 'is to pay for it!" They then went on. Poor Peter, who could not brook any indignity offered to his mistress, immediately came to inform me of the event; which so much affected him, that the tears stood in his eyes.

Seeing the lad so much hurt, I called him a fool, and asked him why he did not tell the rude man that it belonged to him, if he had no objection. The messenger not being returned, the coach still stood at the door, and Peter had resumed his station, when the same gentlemen repassed. Upon which, Peter hearing the remark repeated, addressed the elder of them as I had hinted he should have done before. To this the gentleman said he could not have the least objection; and without any ceremony, they walked up stairs, to the no small surprise of Peter and myself.

Who should the gentlemen be, but Mr. Fox and his commis Mr. Calcraft. I own I was much startled when they entered, hav-

ing never seen Mr. Fox but once before. I had, indeed, had the happiness of being introduced to his lady by the daughters of the Earl of Albermarle. Those ladies had honoured me with peculiar marks of distinction; particularly the late Lady Caroline and the Marchioness of Tavistock. Here I must stop to bedew the memory of those two best of women, with a tear of the sincerest affection. The latter in particular claims tears of gratitude, mingled with blood warm springing from my heart; and these she has. My mind still retains the liveliest impressions of her goodness. The last time I had the *happiness* of seeing her, (I will not call it by so cold a name as *honour*) she assured me of a retreat which would have secured me an independency for life. And which, besides, would have given me an opportunity of enjoying her loved society, whenever the engagements annexed to her exalted situation would afford her leisure; an object of infinitely more consequence to me than rendering me independent.

At the time her ladyship gave me this assurance, she was in perfect health; yet I felt a *presentiment* that I should never see her more. A presage as sure to me, as to those who, we are told, possess the painful gift of second sight; and through every period of my wretched life, it has been the dreadful augurer of all my misfortunes.—The attainment

ment of this instinctive intelligence is not to be accounted for; but I can appeal to every *observant* person, whether they have not found this species of foreknowledge sometimes arise in their minds—This digression, as it is a debt of gratitude, which is at all times acceptable to the Deity, will not, I flatter myself prove *unacceptable* to you or my readers.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R XLII.

Sept. 20, 17—.

MMR. FOX introduced himself by saying, that he hoped the whimsicalness, in the first place, and the irresistible temptation, in the second, would plead as an apology for his intrusion. His attendant entered with an awkward blush of inferiority, which would have passed unnoticed by me; had it not been remarked by the servant who was in the room. The messenger now returning with money from Mr. Brudenell, the horses were discharged. Just at this time General Wall and Comte Haslang, passing by, and seeing the house lighted up, they honoured me with a call. Some conversation upon general topics now passed.

When Mr. Fox withdrew, he requested that I would permit him the pleasure of call-

ing upon me; as he was in town, and much alone, from Lady Caroline's being obliged, through ill health, often to sleep in the country. I was not at this period acquainted with the virtues of that great man, or I should have embraced the offer with infinite readiness. I therefore, out of respect to his Lady, coolly replied, that I should be happy in the honour of seeing him, whenever he had leisure. Thus ended a visit, produced by levity, and concluded with cold civility.

After those gentlemen were gone, their Excellencies enquired the occasion of my receiving a visit from a person of Mr. Fox's eminence; observing that they had never seen him before at my house, though they frequently visited me both in town and at Richmond. Without making a secret of it, I informed them of the ridiculous incident that had occasioned it, with the same simplicity as it had really happened. The General was highly diverted at the story. But as for the Comte, he condescended only to notice it with a smile, and a question, whether upon hearing my situation *he had given me de monies*. Upon my answering that he could not certainly suppose Mr. Fox would be guilty of so much ill manners; he replied only with a shrug of disbelief, added to the aspiration, *umph!* This was the only mode by which the Comte usually expressed either his approbation or dislike. In the former

former case he added a recline of the head to the aspiration; in the latter a shrug of the shoulders.

Whilst the card-table was setting, and we waited for two ladies I had invited to spend the evening, the gentlemen went to the chimney-piece to view some figures of Chelsea china, which the Comte had some time before made me a present of. As they stood, they observed a bit of paper lie near the figures that had the appearance of a bank bill. As I had informed them that I had only the twenty guineas I had just received from Mr. Brudenell, I was asked if I knew what was there. Upon my answering that I did not, they examined, and found it to be a bank bill for fifty pounds.

I did not doubt but Mr. Fox had taken this method to relieve my present necessity, without offending my delicacy. I, however, determined to send it back immediately, not choosing to lie under an obligation to a person who was almost a stranger to me. But I was prevented from doing this, by the Comte, who was the soul of generosity. He observed to me, that by returning it, I should offer the highest affront to the giver of it. He asked me if I should be displeased with such a mark of approbation at my benefit? Why then, said he, should you now? He reminded me, that as many persons, at different times, made me presents, I need

not be more scrupulous to receive them from Mr. Fox than from the General, from him, and several others, who offered them merely as a tribute to my talents, without having any design upon my person. As I could not help acknowledging the weight of the Comte's arguments, I laid aside my intention, and considered myself as indebted to Mr. Fox for a bounty so delicately bestowed.

The evening concluded with my making an addition of fifty more to it, which I won of the *corps diplomatique*. Before we broke up, it was agreed between the General, the Comte, and myself, that for the few weeks before the theatre opened, and occasionally afterwards, we should set up a Pharoah bank, in conjunction with the Marquis de Vernueil, who was expected every day from Yorkshire. Though I had not much ready cash, I had diamonds, which I did not immediately want, and my credit was good; so that I foresaw I should not have much difficulty in raising the thousand pounds, which was to be my share of the capital.

While this affair was in agitation, I went to Richmond for a few days, before I came to town for the approaching season. I had scarcely got out of the chaise, before Mr. Lacy, joint manager with Mr. Garrick, of Drury-lane Theatre, was announced. As he lived but at Isleworth, and we were upon the best terms, I imagined his visit to be merely casual.

casual. But when he entered, to my very great surprize he informed me, that Mrs. Gibber was engaged at Covent-Garden, together with Barry; and that Mr. Quin, from some disgust, had quitted the stage.

This last piece of intelligence I knew not how to believe, as I was still favoured with that gentleman's correspondence, and he certainly would have mentioned to me an event which was of the utmost consequence to me in my theatrical situation. So suspicious an assertion, I acknowledge, ought to have put me upon my guard, and made me doubt the truth of the other part of Mr. Lacy's information. However, giving way to the first impulse of my rage, at this *apparent* proof of Mr. Rich's repeated duplicity; from whom I had a right to expect the most friendly treatment, as his family lived in the strictest terms of intimacy with me, and he himself had often professed that he loved me as well as his own children; without any further consideration, I instantly signed an agreement for three years, which Mr. Lacy had brought with him.

I had no sooner done the irrevocable deed than the Manager, with a malignant grin of self approbation, such as the Demon assumes in the pantomime, when he has prevailed upon Doctor Faustus to sign the fatal warrant, told me that the report of Mrs. Cibber's engagement was *current*; but he could not vouch

for the truth of it. "However," added he, "at all events you must be a gainer by playing with my partner, whose consequence stamps merit where there is none, and in-creases it where there is."

I was greatly displeased at the deception which had been practised upon me, although I was not, from my resentment to Mr. Rich, sorry for the consequences; and the Manager and I parted not on the best terms—Such a palpable imposition, founded on chicanery and falsehood must not pass unnoticed.—Little reason has a man to boast of his cunning, when his schemes are effected at the expence of truth, and at the price of his honour.—My blood boils in my veins at the recollection.—There is no calamity that I could not bear with patience, sooner than to be tricked, even into that for which I most wished.—There is such a meanness in deception, that my nature recoils at it. And as I am incapable of it myself, I can forgive it the less readily in others.—But—*requiescat in pace.*—May he rest in peace.—It is the deed, and not the man, that is the object of my indignation.

The same day, just as I was sitting down to dinner, Mr. Rich and Mr. Bencroft came in. He saluted me with his usual friendship; but as there was other company, we could not speak of business before we had dined. As soon as we found an opportunity, he informed

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ed me that he had engaged Mr. Barry, and had brought with him articles for me to sign. I asked him why it was necessary I should sign an agreement now, supposing I was to be of his company, as I never before had? He started at the word *supposing*; and repeating it, said, he hoped it was no supposition. Upon which I acquainted him that I had actually signed an agreement, that very morning, with Mr. Lacy, in consequence of hearing from him, that Mrs Cibber was engaged at Covent-Garden.

I will not pretend to describe Mr. Rich's feelings on receiving this information. He looked at me, for some time, as if he wished to disbelieve it. I really felt for him; and again execrated in my mind the fiend-like wretch who had occasioned his disappointment; whilst he perhaps was triumphing in the success of his fallacy, and enjoying the most pleasing ideas, unconscious of the dearth of their purchase. Is it right that deception should be rewarded; while the well meaning dupe is a prey to uneasiness and dejection? there *must* be an hereafter; if but to vindicate the justness of that Being who permits this *seeming* injustice.

Mr. Rich now told me, that he had withstood the most urgent solicitations from Mr. Barry relative to an engagement with Mrs. Cibber, as she had offered to come to Covent Garden for seven hundred pounds, which
was

was less than she had at Drury-Lane the winter before. The last season, she had not been able to play, through indisposition. He added, that to shew his regard for me, and the sincerity of his intentions, he had brought articles with him for three years. at five, six, and seven hundred pounds annually. He produced the agreement, which he had got drawn up the preceding day, having then absolutely refused to enter into any engagement whatsoever with Mrs. Cibber. "And now," continued he, "must I be obliged to give her any terms she shall demand."

Upon this explanation, I was equally distressed with Mr. Rich; and sincerely wished I could recall what I had done, not only because the agreement I had entered into with Mr. Lacy was but for three hundred pounds a year, but on account of Mr. Barry's excellence in performing the characters of lovers, which was the line of acting suited to my figure, youth, and powers.

Tho' Mr. Lacy's conduct in this transaction is not to be justified, yet I must take some share of blame to myself, from the precipitation with which I engaged with him.—Precipitation, as I have before observed, is the grand bane of happiness—Had I adhered to the resolution I had formerly made, of consulting my friend, Mr. Quin, upon every step of consequence I was about to take, all then

then would have been well. I should have discovered the fallacy of my temper, and have been upon my guard against any imposition that might have been designed. Instead of which, by giving way to the first transports of my resentment, without knowing whether it was well founded or not, I precipitately committed an error so much to my own disadvantage, and Mr. Rich's vexation.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R X L I I I .

September 27, 1777

UPON my arrival in town from Richmond, I found that the ambassadors still continued in their resolution of setting up a Pharoah bank. As I was determined that every thing should be conducted in an elegant style, I engaged Goundp, the most eminent cook of his time; and O'Bryen happening to be in a bad state of health, I hired his wife also to attend upon me as my French woman.

Having borrowed some money to make up my quota of a thousand pounds, we set off in a very splendid manner. The Marquis de Vernueil or myself always dealt. We were successful, as the bank was rich. But notwithstanding we always won, I only observed one person that seemed to regret their ill success,

success; and that was the Marquis of Granby. It could not be supposed that this dissatisfaction arose from his want of money. He never knew the love of that, any more than myself. It was rather an impatience in his temper, which threw him off his guard, and added to his ill luck.

Mr. Metham writing me word that he should not be in town till Christmas, I was enabled to carry on our scheme so much the longer. Our *petit soupers*, and convivial parties, drew all the gay, fluttering, unthinking, young people of fashion to us. They procured me the happiness of being introduced to the honourable Miss Mostyns, with whom General Wall was very intimate. The eldest of those ladies possessed an understanding superior to most of her sex. And without youth or beauty, the company of all of them was eagerly solicited by every one that had a taste for genteel sociability. They were named, out of pleasantry, as they were formed rather in a spiral than a direct line, *Crimp*, *Crump* and *Crumpling*.

In a short time I had been such a gainer by our bank, that I was not only enabled to redeem my jewels, but to pay my debts, and put some hundreds into my pocket; notwithstanding the great expence I was at. The General and Comte frequently made me presents of wine, chocolate, &c. &c. and had not my theatrical avocations called me from

from this lucrative one, it is a doubt with me, whether I should not have made my fortune.

At this time I lost my faithful O'Bryen, whose memory will be ever dear to me. In her I lost not only a good servant, but a real friend. For though at times she would give into my innocent whims, yet whenever she thought me wrong, she took the liberty to represent the impropriety of my conduct to me with such mildness and good sense, that her reproof always carried conviction with it, and generally had the desired effect. So that O'Bryen usually succeeded, when my mother's violence of temper failed, and, I am concerned to add, made me more obstinate.

The Marquis de Vernueil now returned to Paris; and as Mr. Garrick was come to London, I was obliged to attend to the duties of my profession. The most intense application was necessary for those who fought under his banners. As he was unremitting himself in his attention to business, he expected those he employed to be the same. The last season he had engaged Mrs. Ward, a poor substitute for the incomparable Cibber. But though necessity compelled him to play with her, he took a great distaste to her, on account of her want of feeling. Of this she gave him, one night, the strongest proof, by being employed in adjusting her glove-knot,

knot, which happened to come untied, during one of the most pathetic and interesting scenes in the "Fair Penitent."

Both the theatres opened this season with "Romeo and Juliet." Garrick and myself appeared in the characters at Drury-Lane, Barry and Cibber at Covent-Garden. But to add to the weight of the latter, Mr. Rich had introduced a grand funeral procession. That gentleman was particularly fond of displaying his taste upon such occasions; as in epithalamiums, ovations, triumphal entries, and funeral obsequies. He had an opportunity at this time of laying out nearly as much money as the play brought him. The contest was long; and it was universally allowed, that except in the scene with the friar, Mr. Barry excelled in Romeo. The piece was performed so many nights, that the public as well as the performers were tired and disgusted with it. We, however, got the advantage of some nights. But this was not done without a great deal of paper, which was bestowed upon the occasion.

During the run of this piece, I was informed in the Green Room, that an old lady and gentleman requested to see me. Upon my giving directions that they should be admitted, a gentleman about sixty, and a lady of nearly the same age, were introduced to me. The gentleman then told me, that his name was Gansel. That he had a son a captain.

tain in the guards. That the gout visited him so often, as to induce him to decline sitting in parliament. And that coming to see the play, he and his dame were so enchanted with my performance; and the character I bore in private life, which he had heard from the person at whose house they lodged; that he could not resist the strong desire he had of introducing his lady and himself to me. He then requested the favour of seeing me in Southampton-street, Covent-Garden, the first hour I had to spare, and also at Donnalán Park, near Colchester.

The novelty of such an introduction, added to the open, honest sincerity of the good old gentleman, gave me infinite pleasure, and I promised to wait on them the next day. But nothing would serve him, but I must go in the coach with them that night to supper. Being unwilling to offend persons of their hearty dispositions and consequence, on their offering to wait till I had undressed, I accompanied them home; and in half an hour, we were as well acquainted as if we had known each other for years.—True politeness needs not the aid of ceremony.—An engaging freedom, an easy familiarity, and an unreserved sincerity, are the distinguished characteristics of genuine urbanity.—To narrow minds alone, is a ceremonious formality pleasing.

Mr. Gansel was a man of great natural understanding;

derstanding; which he had cultivated by study and travelling. He had been a constant attendant at Drury-Lane theatre in the time of Booth, Wilks, and Cibber, and a great admirer of those capital performers. He had been likewise an humble servant of the celebrated Mrs. Oldfield. He was a living chronicle; possessing, at the same time, a heart that was generous, humane, and sincere. Though endowed with that true dignity of mind which would not condescend to flatter even majesty; he was so compassionate and inoffensive, that he would not hurt a worm. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that I was happy in cultivating an acquaintance with so valuable a member of society. In return for the honour they had done me, I requested the favour of their company at my house the next day. With this Mr. Gansel complied; and in doing so, insured Mrs. Gansel's acquiescence, who left every thing to his decision.

This lady, conscious of her husband's superiority, submitted her will entirely to his. (A rare instance I own!) She minded little else than her dairy, and family affairs; being what the world generally term a good housewife; that is, she was able to make a shirt or a pudding. Our intimacy continued as long as they staid in town. This agreeable friendship, for so it really was, though of such a recent commencement, in the result, however,

however, turned out to be one of the most *unfortunate* epochas of my whole life, as will be seen hereafter.

About this time Mr. Metham came to town. The satisfaction he received, from seeing me so much admired as an actress, and from my having successfully stood a competition with the first female tragedian in the world, was beyond expression. And whilst it pleased his vanity, it encreased, if possible, his affection. My mother and dear boy were now also come to London. But as my house was too small for this encrease of family, I procured a lodging for my mother near me; and Mr. Metham took one for himself at Deard's in Pall-Mall.

Upon breaking up of our Pharoah scheme, I had prudently discharged my man-cook, with a promise of taking him again, if I should ever be in a situation to enable me to keep one. I had hired a maid-servant in the place of my faithful O'Bryen, who was just the reverse of that worthy creature. She had been woman to a lady of quality; and was, like Tattlehead, one of those civil, dishonest servants that never tell a disagreeable truth, nor speak well of their mistresses when they are absent. Her master was the person to whom she paid the greatest attention, endeavouring studiously to please him; whilst she shewed very little regard to me or my commands. But as I still retained Madam Goundu

Goundu for my dresser, I had very little opportunity of knowing any thing relative to her.

An unexpected event soon deprived me of the services of Peter; and my own servant having set up the business of a cheesemonger, I was left to the rapacious depredations of servants, who had no regard but for themselves, and studied their own ease and interest more than mine. And this my attendance at the theatre prevented me from observing, or being able to prevent.

One morning I was informed that a foreign gentleman desired to see me. As Madam Brilliant fancied she could never sufficiently repay the civilities I had shewed her in her distress, and took every opportunity which offered of sending me some token of her gratitude and attention, I concluded it was some person that waited on me by her desire. Or else I thought it might be some body from the Marquis de Vernueil, as he honoured me with his correspondence. I therefore ordered that the gentleman should be admitted.

Being shewn in, he requested to know whether I had not a youth in my service whose name was Peter? On my answering that I had, he exclaimed with transport, "Then, thank God, I have found my son!" The agitation of the stranger on receiving this assurance, and my surprise at so unexpected an event, occasioned a silence for some

time. In the interim, Peter entered the room leading in my little boy, with whom he had been taking a walk. Upon seeing his father, he dropped upon the floor in a state of insensibility; and it was not without some difficulty that he was brought to himself. When he was a little recovered, his father assured him of his forgiveness, telling him also that his companion was living. Upon which the boy's face brightened up, and falling upon his knees, he cried with great fervency, "Thank God! Thank God!"

This exclamation exciting my curiosity, I begged the gentleman to explain to me the cause of the scene I had just been a witness to. He replied "that I will do with the greatest readiness, Madam. I am a wine-merchant of some eminence at Bruges. My son, whom you see before you, had a quarrel with his favourite school-fellow, at the time he was about twelve years of age, in which he received a blow. Enraged at the affront, he plunged a knife, which he unfortunately had in his hand, into the bosom of the lad that had offended him. Shocked at the deed he had just committed, and apprehensive of falling into the hands of justice, he fled. And all the enquiries I have made after him, during six years, have been till now ineffectual. Some business calling me to England, a townsman of mine informed

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“ me yesterday that he had seen my son
 “ Peter go into a house in Frith-Street. His
 “ information was the means of my paying
 “ you this visit, Madam, and has restored to
 “ me my child.”

Though I was concerned at losing a servant who had been so faithful to me, and had shewn me so much respect and attention; yet I could not help being pleased that his father had discovered him, and that he would now be removed to a situation more eligible than that of servitude. In a short time he left me, with a mind deeply impressed with gratitude for the pleasing reverse he had experienced in my service to that from which I rescued him. And his father gave me a pressing invitation to pay him a visit, if ever I should travel through Flanders. Which some years after I did; when he made my short stay as agreeable to me as he could.

G. A. B.

LETTER XLIV.

Oct. 3, 17—.

THE success we met with at Drury-lane Theatre was infinitely greater than we had reason to expect, considering Mrs. Cibber had not played the preceding winter, which made

made her appearance the greater novelty now. My mother was continually inciting me to require of Mr. Metham that he would make me his wife. This I promised her to do; but no opportunity for carrying my promise into execution, for some time, presented itself. For I was seldom alone with him, either from my engagements at the theatre, or from the company which we constantly had.

At last, finding one day an opportunity, I asked him, without any circumlocution, whether he would marry me? He made me no answer, but abruptly left the room. This cavalier behaviour surprised me the more, as he was usually extremely polite to every one; and particularly so to me. I was therefore highly offended at such an indignity, and resolved to let him see that I resented it. I accordingly rung the bell the moment he was gone, and ordered the servant not to admit him when he came again.

But in about an hour, I received a card from him, which informed me, that his brother-in-law, Mr. Dives, and himself, would dine with me; and as they should come about business, he requested that I would admit no other company. I had no doubt but that the business they were coming on, was relative to the question I had put to him in the morning.

When they appeared I observed another

gentleman, with whom I was totally unacquainted, but whom I soon found to be an attorney. Mr. Metham, who was the spokesman, now entered upon the business which had procured me the honour of this visit. He began with a consequential exordium in favour of his brother-in-law. This was of such a length that it had the appearance of a sermon. At last, however, he came to the point. When I found that they had come to execute a writing before me, in which Mr. Metham had agreed, that in case he died without legitimate issue, the estates he expected to receive from his father, and those he now enjoyed in right of his mother, were to devolve to Mr. Dives, who had married his sister, and to their heirs. In this deed Mr. Dives had kindly consented to *join* him in securing to me an annuity of three hundred pounds a year, and the sum of two thousand pounds to our son George.

I at first esteemed this acquiescence of Mr. Dives to be an act of disinterested generosity; and as such I sincerely thanked him for it. But upon showing the writing to my mother, after they were gone, she entertained a different opinion of it. She told me, it appeared evident to her, that Mr. Dives, who had acquired a perfect knowledge of the world, and had studied with the greatest minuteness Mr. Metham's disposition, had a view solely to his *own interest*,
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in the execution of the deed. For under the cover of this disinterested provision for me and my child, he had a design to prevent his brother-in-law from marrying, in order to secure his estates to himself and family. With regard to my settlement, she observed, that it was but an inconsiderable return for Mr. Metham's kindness to them. For though they had no other subsistence, than three hundred pounds a year, which had been settled on Mrs. Dives out of her brother's estate in Staffordshire, yet he generally, by additional presents, made that at least eight or nine hundred, one year with another; his fondness for his sister being only surpassed by his tenderness for me.

My mother having placed the transaction in so different a point of view; instead of entertaining sentiments of gratitude for Mr. Dives, as I had done, and warmly expressed, at the time of the execution of the deed, I now adopted others of another nature. I concluded it to be an artful plan of the two brothers, to induce me to give up my expectations of ever being the wife of Mr. Metham.

Though I had quitted the theatre of Covent-Garden, and had given the manager reason to be displeased with me, by my precipitate engagement with the other house, yet my intimacy with Mr. Rich's family still continued. I likewise was happy in the

continuance of Mr. Quin's friendship ; which indeed, I can with pleasure say, I retained to the day of his death. To this never-failing friend and faithful monitor, I therefore applied for advice in my present dilemma. Profiting by the error I had committed in my negotiation with Mr. Lacy, I solicited his admonitions, without delay, and determined to abide by them.

On my application to Mr. Quin, he first asked me whether I really loved Mr. Metham ? To which I answered that I did, in preference to the whole world. He then advised me not to make myself unhappy, or home disagreeable to him, by urging him again on the subject. " If you were actually married," proceeded he, " you could not go by his " name whilst you continue on the stage. " And it will be necessary you should pursue that profession as long as Mr. Montgomery, Mr. Metham's father, lives. You are " both single, and if you remain attached to " each other, I cannot see of what real service the ceremony would be with regard to outward appearance, as the world " are of opinion that it already has been performed, but for prudential reasons kept " secret ; let me therefore advise you to " urge the affair no more to him, leave it to " his own honour and affection ; of both of " which you cannot have the least doubt. " These will operate with infinitely more " power

“ power than any arguments of yours can do, “ when he is left at leisure to reflect on the “ propriety of such a step.” Nearly in these words did my second father give me his advice; and as I knew his judgment in such concerns to be far superior to my own, I resolved implicitly to follow the directions he had given me. I accordingly returned home much more at ease than I was before. And when Mr. Metham and I met, I took care, whatever uneasiness lurked in my heart, that it should not be visible to him.

But the consolation Mr. Quin had afforded me was but transitory.—Though, agreeable to his advice, I concealed my wishes, I could not totally suppress them.—I was conscious that my character received a stain from the nature of my connection with Mr. Metham, which neither the reflection that it originated from the sincerest and most disinterested affection; that it was not entered into without the fullest expectation of a more honourable union taking place; and that it had been continued with an unblemished purity of conduct; were sufficiently palliative to expunge.—It is true that in the eye of heaven, such a connection, when conducted with this propriety, may not need the repetition of the nuptial ceremony. In such a case the deluded fair one might say, with Eloisa, “ Curse “ on all laws but those which love has “ made!”—But to preserve the due regula-

tion of the degrees of consanguinity ; an indisputable succession of property ; a respect to the rules of society ; and to serve as a restraint to the roving disposition of the libertine ; it is necessary that an odium should be annexed to any other than a *legal* connection.

My benefit this season turned out very lucrative. As I was now in a circle with some of the first people of distinction, besides those who had hitherto been my patronesses, I was honoured with the patronage of the Essex family ; the Lady Capels were as partial to me as the Lady Keppels ; particularly Lady Mary. The piece I had was, " Tancred and Sigismunda ;" in which I succeeded much beyond my hopes, as Mrs. Cibber was the original Sigismunda, and most capitally great in the performance of that character ; so that I acquired, in addition to the emoluments, an increase of fame.

A most ridiculous event happened at one of the benefits at our theatre this season ; which I shall relate merely for the singularity of it. There was a performer in the company who was retained in it by the acting manager, more for the flattery which he from time to time bestowed upon him, than through any merit he had as an actor. This person, whose name was Sowden, was by trade a horse milliner. He had, however, obtained so much influence over Mr. Garrick, that he prevailed upon that gentleman to play for his benefit ;

benefit; which was a favour he usually granted only to the first performers. He had the "Orphan" for his night, in which Mr. Garrick played Chamont, Mr. Sowden, Polydore, and myself, Monimia. In the fourth act, whilst in the most pathetic part of it, I was informing Chamont of all my distress, I heard a voice uttering somewhat aloud; but what it was I could not distinguish, from being so susceptible interested in my part. Whilst Chamont was replying to me, as I was then more at liberty to attend, I heard the same voice articulate the words, "Rumps and burrs! rumps and burrs!" Roscius, who was the most tenacious man alive of a due observance of theatrical order and regularity, imagining the noise came from behind the scenes, exclaimed in a quick manner, "What is that?" He was at the same time so disconcerted by the incident, that losing entirely the powers of recollection, he repeated different passages out of different plays till I was as much bewildered as himself, and totally unprepared to give a connected answer. We had, therefore, nothing else to do, than to put an end to our embarrassment by bringing the scene to an abrupt conclusion. It seems the exclamation proceeded from *the balcony*, where one of the lower ranks of city ladies, an admirer of Mr. Sowden's theatrical talents, had placed herself (as a benefit levels all distinction) in honour of him.

him. During the preceding scene, which, though interesting, was not much to her mind, she had indulged herself with a nap. In this short nap she was conveyed in idea back to her stall in the city; and the duties of her business, which she left but on such particular occasions, being uppermost on her mind, she was crying her rumps and burrs, as if she had been standing at her own door. As soon, however, as her favourite actor appeared, she awoke. But I was so much disconcerted by the good woman's sleeping flight, that though I should have continued on during the whole scene, I soon left Mr. Polydore to substitute what he pleased for the entertainment of his polite audience, and to speak his descriptive conclusion alone.

Methinks I hear you laugh at the foregoing ridiculous scene—I assure you I did, and that most heartily, when it happened; that is, as soon as I had recovered from the confusion into which it had thrown the immortal *Roscus* and myself.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R XLV.

Oct. 9, 17—.

AT the conclusion of this winter, I lost my much valued friend Miss Conway. Having overheated herself at a ball, she indiscreetly

discreetly drank lemonade, which occasioned her dying in a few hours in the most excruciating pains. As I have already observed, this best and most delicate of women, expired in my arms. And I was happy in being present to sooth; by every tender endearment, the bitterness of death.

I received about this time, also, a very warm invitation from Miss St. Leger, to pass the ensuing summer with her in the South of France. Her uncle, Lord Doneraile, she informed me, was dead, and had left her the whole of his fortune, exclusive of his lady's jointure. To which, she added, that she was married to Major Burton, but still enjoyed such a bad state of health, as to be unable to return to England.

I was obliged, by a similar affliction, not only to decline this lady's invitation, but to postpone my conquest of *Louis the Fifteenth*, and to suffer that monarch to enjoy his liberty a little longer. My indisposition was productive of a lassitude, which prevented my forming parties, as I used to do, or from carrying into execution any favourite project. It however left me at leisure to enjoy the placid society of those friends who honoured me with their company. Such being my situation, nothing material happened during this summer.

At the opening of the ensuing season, Mr. Garrick produced two new performers.

These were Mr. Mossop and Mr. Ross. The former in the cast of parts which had belonged to the inimitable Quin, who this winter retired from the stage; the other in those of lovers and genteel comedy. Mr. Mossop had a fine voice, but an uncouth manner. For a more particular description of him, I will refer you to Churchill's "Rosciad." Mr. Ross was handsome, his figure elegant, and his voice agreeable. He would have been a valuable acquisition to the theatre, had not his indolence, and love of conviviality, prevented his exercising that application, without which it is impossible to shine on the stage. He seemed to wish to imitate Mr. Quin in being a *bon vivant*; without remembering that that great man never gave loose to his favourite passion till his business at the theatre was over.

The aid of these two gentlemen was not productive of that success the manager hoped for. They pleased; but they did not excite the public attention. And except the nights on which Garrick himself performed, there were but indifferent houses. The manager had this season accepted of four new pieces, and he revived "The Mourning Bride," in which he played Osmyn. I had unintentionally offended him, by sending to Doctor Young, to beg the favour of reading his new piece of "The Brothers," during my illness. This unpardonable crime was to be revenged
by

by teaching Mrs. Pritchard the part of Zara, and neglecting the poor Bride. My success, however, in *Almeria* (pardon the seeming vanity) was as great even as Garrick's acting, which was beyond description. But notwithstanding the unbounded applause he deservedly met with in the character of *Osmyn*, and the most considerable receipts, for eight nights, that had, at that time, ever been known; I believe he would gladly have sacrificed both his reputation and his profit, sooner than I should have acquired the approbation of the public, as I did in the character of *Almeria*.

Doctor Young's tragedy of "The Brothers" was first put in rehearsal. And from a supposition that it was superior to his "Revenge," great hopes were entertained of its success. The parts were delivered out at the same time for Mr. Moore's comedy of "Gill Blas." In the success of which, the manager, from his friendship for the author, greatly interested himself. Mr. Garrick sent me a part in the first mentioned piece, which I declined accepting.

This gave him great offence, and provoked him to write to me in the following terms. "Since you have humbugged the town, I suppose you think you are intitled to do whatever you please. The liberty you have taken in asking to peruse Doctor Young's piece, is unwarrantable. And I will con-

“vince you that *I alone* am the person to be addressed in whatever concerns the theatre. “I shall find means to repay the contempt you have been pleased to show me.” In this doughty manner did he write to me for having committed an-unintentional offence, (if it can be construed into an offence) as he was tenacious in the extreme of every branch of his managerial prerogative.

As it cannot be supposed that I would willingly be upon bad terms with the director of the corps in which I served; and only meant to hasten the piece by endeavouring to study the part intended for me, which I had been informed was very long, I could not help answering the manager’s undeserved epistle with some asperity. I informed him that I had not meant to infringe upon his authority, or to lessen his great dignity. But that, notwithstanding I was to be governed with the greatest ease by complacency, yet no power on earth should rule me with a rod of iron.

This produced a declaration of war; as it lighted up a flame which had long laid smothering in his bosom.—This great *little* man, for so he was in the literal sense of the word, was possessed of as much meanness as merit. This is a bold assertion I acknowledge; especially as he was allowed by persons of the greatest judgment to be the most complete actor that ever trod the stage; yet

yet the dexterity of his management was equal to his performance. Of which I shall give the following specimen.

He used to send Mr. Varney, the house-keeper, round among the ladies of quality, to inform them, as a matter of favour, that his master played such a part on such a night; to which Mr. Varney used to add, "And, if possible, I will secure a box for your ladyship." I have been present when he has called on ladies with this story, who have acknowledged themselves much obliged to him for his intelligence, and have given him a guinea for this particular mark of attention, exclusive of the usual present at Christmas, and at his benefit. And this he has done at the time, that to my certain knowledge, there has not been one box really engaged in the book for the night of performance he has mentioned.

Upon my appearing in the green-room for the first time after the before-mentioned letters had passed, the manager accosted me with, "Ah, ah, ah, madam, you are come at last.—It was unfortunate for us, that the Doctor insisted upon your being his heroine." To this I readily assented; as I really thought with him that Mrs. Pritchard would have appeared in the character to much more advantage; as I had such a natural dislike to haughtiness, that it was with difficulty I could assume it; and when I did,

I was

I was never successful. I publicly expressed these sentiments, which were not uttered from pique or resentment to the manager, but were the real dictates of my heart. To this I added, that I sincerely thought his favourite, Mrs. Pritchard, would gain more credit to herself and the piece, than I should; and, consequently, be the means of acquiring more considerable emoluments for the author. And being thus conscious of my inability, I was ready to give up the part.

Here the Doctor cried out, "No! no!" which did not seem to please the manager. Indeed he appeared to be much mortified at my *sansfroid*. But as I had declared with so much disinterestedness, that I had no great hopes of success in the character, there was nothing further left for him to say upon the occasion.

When the piece was read, I objected to a line, which I imagined came with but an ill grace from the mouth of a lady; even from so high-flighted a one as the Princess Irexine. This was the sentence.

—"I will speak to you in thunder."

Upon my making the objection, the author replied, that he thought it the most forcible line in the piece. To which I answered, that it would be much more so, if he joined lightning to it. Hearing this, he began to wax warm; and declared that the performance then
reading

reading was the *best* he had ever wrote. I could not now resist saying, "I fear, Doctor, I shall lose your favour, in the same manner as Gill Blas, upon a similar occasion, did that of the Bishop of Toledo. And I cannot help reminding you of a tragedy called the *"Revenge."* My having given the Doctor's *thunder* a companion, had set the risible features of the performers in motion. This unfortunately increased the agitation I had put him into, by not allowing him to be able to judge of the merit of his own compositions, and threw him into the most extravagant passion.

I now repented of my petulance to the doctor, as I had the highest esteem for him, and had lived in the strictest intimacy with his daughter. I therefore went up to him, and taking him by the hand, requested that he would not only forgive me for what I had said, but that he would likewise recall to his memory those divine precepts he had promulgated in his *"Night Thoughts;"* lest, by thus giving way to such immoderate anger, he should convince us, that even *he*, only knew and gave us the theory, without being master of the practical part. The Doctor thanked me cordially for the rebuke; and striding two or three times across the room, apparently in as much distress as we may suppose Jephtha to have been, when he carried into execution his rash vow; he took
his

his pen, and to the astonishment of Mr. Garrick, struck out the line which had occasioned the contest. He then sat down, as composed as if nothing had happened.

But what greatly added to my triumph, and to the surprize of the manager, who well knew the Doctor's tenacious disposition, was his inviting himself home to dine with me. This mark of reconciliation, you may be assured, I received with pleasure; and Mr. Quin, coming to town that day, he joined us. A more happy trio, I believe, never sat down to table together. What greatly enhanced the pleasure of the Doctor was, that Mr. Quin had been in possession of the character of Zanga, in his "Revenge," alone and unrivalled for years. The Doctor acquainted my much-loved friend with the fracas that had happened in the green-room. To which Mr. Quin humourously replied, "Oh Doctor! if you knew what that girl could do as well as say, you would not be surprized at any thing relative to her." I well knew this was intended by Mr. Quin as an eulogium to me, yet I much feared the Doctor would not esteem it so. He however, said, that he had been informed of the goodness of my heart, which induced him to impute what I had uttered to sincerity; whereas, he should otherwise have esteemed it conceited impertinence.

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The force of prejudice has often surprised me. Its influence is unbounded. There is scarcely an adage that has more truth in it, or will bear a more extensive application, than that vulgar one of "Give a dog an ill name," &c. A few brilliant actions will frequently establish a character, of which, from the general tenor of their conduct, the person is not deserving. And on the contrary, one unguarded action will damn their fairest fame.—Thus, though by some trifling instances of humanity, from which I could not arrogate to myself any merit, (the impulse, as I have before said, being irresistible) I stamped an impression in my favour on the minds of two men, who may truly be said to be most valuable members of society.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R XLVI.

Oct. 18, 17—.

THE good Doctor's piece ran ten nights. But this arose more from the author's character being so universally revered, than from any intrinsic merit there was in it. Roscius had appeared in "Gill Blas;" which was played first, and of which, had the parts that he and Woodward filled; been reversed, and had a more juvenile figure represented the young lady, so premature a fate might not have been its portion. It was, however, condemned

demned to oblivion the second night of representation. And had not Mr. Town *begged* a third night for the author, Mr. Moore would only have had his labour for his pains.—On the judicious casting of the characters of a new piece a great deal depends. If a play has ever so great merit, unless this part of the business of the theatre be carefully attended to, in vain has the author gnawed his pen, and racked his brains.

Our next essay was a play altered from the French by Doctor Francis, the then *reputed* translator of Horace. It was intitled “Eugenia, or the supposed Daughter.” And notwithstanding Mr. Garrick, and all his principal performers played in it, they could only *drag* it on for six or nine nights, (I cannot recollect which) to empty benches and a dead silence. This discomfited the manager. But his last exhibition, “The Masque of Alfred,” written by Mallet, carried sure success along with it. This piece had been exhibited some years before at Cliefden, the summer residence of the Prince and Princess of Wales. The great part, though not the principal character, that of the Hermit, was adapted by the author to his friend Quin. But when he offered the piece to the manager of Drury-lane, he made that of Alfred, the consequential and striking part, as well as the capital character. In this Mr. Garrick exceeded even himself. And when

when he repeated the following line, which the author had borrowed from the *Athalia* of Racine.

“ I fear God, and have no other fear. ”

He appeared to be another Atlas ; and like him carried a world upon his shoulders. The success I met with in *Elfrida* was more from situation and dress than from the merit of the part ; as it was very mediocre, and short, though the character is amiable.

From being indisposed at the beginning of the winter, and so constantly employed during the remainder of it, I had neither time nor inclination to see much company. I had even very little of Mr. Metham's company, as he was generally at White's, or some other coffee-house losing his money. The thirtieth of January approaching, on which there was no performance, and it being Metham's birth day, I proposed giving a gala to his friends and my own. Accordingly I sent for Goundu to dress the dinner ; and I ordered Robinson, the confectioner, to furnish the desert.

The gentleman, on whose account the feast was celebrated, brought Mr. Calcraft in his hand ; who was only known to me by having been in company with Mr. Fox when he accidentally honoured me with a visit, as before related, and from his being a constant attendant at the theatre, where he was introduced to me by Lord Robert Sutton. He sat at the bot-

tom

tom of the table next to his introducer. The dinner was much admired. But when the desert was placed on the table, it was extolled in the highest terms. It was indeed more sumptuous than it could be supposed Mr. Metham's fortune could afford; and the ordering of it seemed to reflect no great honour on my prudence.

I was much complimented for my taste in it. But one of the company observing, that it might have been spared, or at least that it might have been more confined, I became sensible of the impropriety I had been guilty of, in leaving it indiscriminately to the confectioner. It being, however, now too late to be rectified, I endeavoured to turn it off by pleasantry; saying, "I was not in fear of visiting the new buildings in St. George's-fields, on account of it; but if ever I should, I hoped some one or other of them would release me." Upon which Mr. Metham arose, more like an inhabitant of Moor-fields, than the master of the feast, and declared I might rot there before he would release me.

The surprise this extraordinary declaration excited in the company, and the damp it threw upon them, produced a dead silence for a few moments. At length the newly-introduced visitor, turning to Mr. Metham, said to him, "I hope, Sir, you will not be angry with those that will! I endeavoured to recover my spirits,

spirits, but all in vain. The festivity of the company was entirely destroyed. And though I did not regret the expence of the day, I could not help lamenting that my intentions were frustrated. What added to my vexation was, that there being no place of public entertainment open, on that evening, to induce the company to take their leave, I found myself under the necessity of assuming a cheerfulness, while my heart was bursting; and I was obliged to continue in this state of torture, till three or four o'clock the next morning.

I just had time to request one of the ladies to prevail upon Mr. Metham to go away; and I believe he was happy in the opportunity of doing so; as he could not avoid perceiving to what an irksome situation his mistaken jealousy (for to that passion alone was his rudeness to be imputed) had brought the whole company, as well as placed us in the most ridiculous light. Lord Downe, who had honoured us with his presence, having entertained a suspicion that the insult was indirectly aimed at him, went away as soon as decency would permit.—And here I must declare, which I do most solemnly, that though I had every reason to believe this nobleman had more than a partiality for me; whilst I was under the protection of Mr. Metham, he never breathed an accent that might be construed into love.

After

After the gentlemen were gone, some of my female friends pleaded Metham's cause; urging every thing that could be said in his behalf, and soliciting me to forgive him. Till at last, aggravated by the insult, and teized by their solicitations, I dropped on my knees before them, and made the most sacred vow, that if he was now to offer me his hand, I would with scorn refuse it. To which I added, with the same solemn energy, that I never would, even though death were to be the immediate consequence, from that time to my dying hour, have any connection whatever with him.

Oh Sterne! had thy recording angel but obliterated with a tear of pity this vow, this hasty vow, and thereby erased it forever from the eternal register of mortals deeds, I might have still been happy.—But ah! it was not to be done.—The occasion deserved not the same sacred interference as that which thou hast so pathetically described.—The pure spirit saw from what a benign source the error of thy offending hero sprung.—He perceived it to be a virtue of the first water almost imperceptibly sullied by the frailty of human nature.—But mine had not any merit to plead in its favour, and excite the compassion of those discriminating beings.—It was a vow of passion and resentment; and as such claimed not an angel's pitying tear.

Mr.

Mr. Metham came the next day, and endeavoured to atone for the rudeness he had been guilty of, by the most submissive concessions. He imputed it to a momentary frenzy which he could not controul; but which proceeded from the excess of his love. My resentment was, however, too lively to be subdued by any arguments he could make use of. Neither the most passionate professions of unabated tenderness from *him*, nor the soft whispers of that affection I had long borne him, which would have pleaded his cause in my own bosom, made any impression on my offended mind. I remained inexorable to every conciliating effort, and he went away in a state of dejection scarcely to be imagined.

Next to my boasted sincerity, I have ever prided myself in my perseverance. In which I persist, as I have already said, though ruin follows.—Happy would it have been for me, however, as the sequel will prove, had not the offence been given, or that I had not so far yielded to the impetus of my resentment, as to make such vows upon the occasion, as I considered myself bound to hold inviolable. Not only seven times shalt thou forgive, says the Prince of Peace, but *seventy times seven*. Besides, the renewal of love from the quarrel of lovers, is an adage of the earliest ages. Time, which brings with it experience, too often experience too dearly bought,

bought, enables me *now* to make this cool and dispassionate reflection. But, alas! at that period, I was young, unexperienced, blind to the future, and tenacious of resolutions, which perhaps, as Hamlet says, would "have been more honoured in the breach, than in the observance."

As soon as my company were gone, the preceding night, or rather morning, I retired to my room; but my mind being too much discomposed to think of rest, I only walked about it. Whenever I approached the window, I observed, by the light of the lamps, a man in the street, who seemed as much agitated as myself. My attention was, however, so engrossed by my own troubles, that even curiosity could not excite me to bestow a thought on him. Had I done so, I should have concluded him to be some fortune-hunter upon the watch for a rich heiress, who lived next door to me, and who was deprived almost of seeing the light, by an *Argus* of an old uncle. This would have been my conjecture, had the singularity of the circumstance engaged my notice; little thinking our agitations proceeded from the same source; but it did not.

After some days, Mr. Metham finding that I still persisted in the resolution of not admitting him as a lover, solicited to visit me as a friend; and he prevailed upon Colonel Sandford to persuade me to receive his visits upon

upon those terms. To this I, at length, consented; and I yielded my consent the more readily, as I had formed a resolution never to enter into a tender connection with any other person, but to dedicate the whole of my attention to the duties of my profession.

I now wrote to Mr. Quir, to give him an account of the revolution that had taken place in my affairs; and at the same time I informed him of my determination to avoid an union with any of his sex. He wrote me for answer that he very much approved the latter part of my letter, and made use of many arguments to confirm me in the resolution. As to the opinion of the world, it was of very little value, in my estimation. And as a proof that I had always held it so, I had never kept secret from it any part of my conduct. As I was thus unreserved, people charitably gave me credit for more follies than I was guilty of. It being the custom of the censorious to err always on the *unfavourable* side, in such a calculation.

The undiscerning multitude judge of actions from appearance alone. The accidents from whence they proceed, and the motives that have governed them, lie hid from their view.—So that whoever places their happiness on the good opinion of the world, will pass many a sleepless night.—Some respect is indeed due to reputation, especially from the

female sex. But if untoward circumstances have rendered every care to preserve that, ineffectual; and either ill-founded suspicions, or an unguarded moment, have cast a stain upon it; the consciousness of a purity of intention should enable us to set at defiance the slanders of that many-tongued demon, who, "making the wind his post-horse, is continually stuffing the ears of men with false reports."

A few mornings after, my maid brought me a packet that had been left for me; which upon opening, I found to contain ten bank bills of one hundred pounds each, inclosed in a blank cover. I directly concluded that such an instance of munificence could only come from the nobleman I have lately mentioned. Upon revolving in my mind the circumstance, and endeavouring to trace from probability the sender, I could fix on no one that seemed so likely to be the person as his Lordship. But as a present of such magnitude could not come from any one who was not greatly interested about me, I judged the person that sent it would not remain long concealed; I therefore locked up the packet with a determination not to break into the sum it contained upon any account, but to wait the event.

Mr. Metham being to dine with me, I asked Colonel Sandford to accompany him; as I thought a *tele-a-tete*, in the present situation

tion of affairs between us, would be awkward, and not very agreeable to both. And with these two gentlemen came Mr. Calcraft, with whom Metham was now grown very intimate. Mrs. Lane, the second daughter of Mrs. Rich, happening accidentally to fall in, she made likewise one of the party.

During dinner I was regretting that I could not obtain places to see the new pantomime of "Harlequin Sorcerer," the houses being so crowded that there was not a seat to be got. Upon which Mrs. Lane politely offered to procure seats for me, any evening I should chuse to go, as well as for the young Dives, who still continued to be generally with me. As I was not engaged the Saturday following at the theatre, that evening was fixed on for my going. The *dear* friend of the unsuspecting Metham, Mr. Calcraft, now proposed to the gentlemen a party to Oxford on some pretext or other. As the Colonel and Mr. Metham were both men of pleasure, they readily accepted the offer; and it was agreed that they should set off the next morning.

G. A. B.

LETTER XLVII.

Oct. 26, 17—.

MR. GARRICK, in order to fill his house, was now obliged to play very often himself. And having had such ill success with all his new pieces, except "The Masque of Alfred," he determined in future to stick to his old ones; which he had always experienced to be both staple and lucrative. His appearing in Hamlet on the Saturday, which had been announced some time, gave me an opportunity of availing myself of Mrs. Lane's interest at Covent-Garden. She herself did me the favour to accompany me; and I took with me Miss Dives and her two brothers.

Soon after we were seated, to my great surprise, I heard my places called for; and who should make his appearance but Mr. Calcraft. After a thousand apologies for the liberty he had taken, he seated himself; and as we were confined for room, he was obliged to take one of the boys upon his knee. I then naturally enquired, why he did not pursue his journey to Oxford; and whether Mr. Metham was returned? He gave me for answer, that he had been obliged to come back upon some very extraordinary business, an express having overtaken him at Salt-hill,

to

to recall him to town; but that the two gentlemen had continued their rout.

As Mr. Calcraft was a man of business, this story passed current with me. Indeed as I could not entertain the most distant idea that he could have had the presumption to conceive any design upon me, or the vanity to attempt to rival Metham, the excuse he made carried with it an appearance of probability, and passed without further notice. At the conclusion of the piece, he handed us to the carriage, and requested permission to wait upon us home. This I consented to, and when we were set down, I asked him to stay supper.

It being very late before the entertainment was concluded, supper was not over till near two. And as there was neither coach nor chair to be got for Mrs. Lane, and my carriage was set up, Mr. Calcraft offered her his chair, which was in waiting. As that lady's house was as far off as Cary street, Lincoln's-Inn Fields, he was obliged to stay a considerable time before his chairmen could return. This procured him a *tete-à-tete*, which otherwise he could never have obtained.

Before I proceed, it will be necessary to give some description of a person who will constitute so conspicuous a part in the dramatic personæ of my work. He was at that time called *honest* Jack Calcraft. Whether his conduct since intitles him to this invaluable

able epithet, I shall leave to your discernment. He was tall, rather inclined to be *en bon point*, of a florid complexion, blue eyes, auburn hair; and, taken together, he had a manly handsome face, and a well made person; but from a slouch he had by some means or other contracted, or perhaps *from not having learned to dance*, as *Coupée* says, he had a certain vulgarity in his figure, that was rather disgusting. Indeed, but few men appeared to advantage when Mr. Metham was present, as his form was eminently attracting, and his *déportment* truly elegant. Mr. Calcraft did not attempt to impose himself on his acquaintance, either as a man of letters or a wit. He had sense enough to know that such a deception would prove too manifest to pass without discovery.

His father was the town clerk of Grantham. He had given his son a country school education, that is, he could read indifferently; but to make amends for this he was an adept in figures, and was perfectly acquainted with keeping a ledger. This qualification, joined to unremitted assiduity, enabled him, from being a clerk with a salary of only forty pounds a year, to acquire a *princely* fortune.

When we were left alone, the conversation turned upon the impropriety of Mr. Metham's behaviour to me, at which he had been present some days before. He said, it was only to be excused, by considering it as the
the

the madness of jealousy. And he seemed to regret his friend's extravagance of temper, which had led him to make use of a brutal expression, that had rendered him miserable.

This apparently unaffected concern for his friend, added to the general character he bore, gave me so favourable an opinion of him, that I doubted not but he was really as honest a young man as he was represented to be. I therefore informed him in confidence, of the bills which had been sent me. As I considered him at too great a distance to form any design upon me, his seeming diffidence, his affected moderation, and apparent frankness pointed him out, since he had been thus thrown in my way, as the most proper person I could consult upon the occasion. I accordingly showed him the bills, and asked him whether he could judge, by the superscription, from whom they came.

He seemed highly flattered at the confidence with which I honoured him; and advised me by all means to make use of them.

At the same time he declared that had he possessed the power, he would have done the same, without any interested views. Having myself the most romantic notions of generosity, I was readily induced to believe that the person who had sent them, (which, in my own mind, I believed to be Lord Downe) had no other view than to extricate me from

some difficulties, which upon the terms Metham and myself at present were, I might not chuse to ask or receive from him.

Mr. Calcraft then asked me whether I thought Mr. Metham intended to marry me? In answer to which, I frankly told him, I would not accept his hand was he now to offer it to me. To this I added, that I had formed a resolution never to enter into another engagement, let it be ever so eligible and advantageous. At this part of our conversation the return of the chair being announced, he took his leave; requesting that I would permit him the honour of waiting upon me when I had leisure. To this I assented; and then retired to my room, without entertaining any idea of what an indiscretion I had been guilty, in sitting till such an hour in the morning with a young man, who, though I esteemed him to be too insignificant to cause reflections on my character, might not be deemed so by *others*—The consciousness of acting right is not alone sufficient to secure from censure; every appearance of indiscretion must also be attentively avoided.—If notwithstanding “we be as chaste as ice, and as pure as snow, we shall not escape ‘calumny,’ as Hamlet tells Ophelia; with what circumspection must it be necessary that the most innocent should act, to preserve their characters, as much as possible, from imputed stains!

The

The next night was Mrs. Pritchard's benefit, in which I performed. The stage was exceedingly crowded. When a person in liquor accosted me, as I stood ready to go on, in a very rude manner. Mr. Calcraft, who happened to be by, hearing what passed, immediately resented the affront that had been offered to me; and, after some words that ensued, knocked the stranger down. As soon as the aggressor was able to rise, my champion desired he would walk out, as he wanted to speak with him. They accordingly withdrew together; but upon Mr. Calcraft's speedily returning with looks of cheerfulness, we all concluded the affair was amicably adjusted. This excited the first idea that ever arose in my mind of his entertaining a partiality for me; and made me repent that I had given him an invitation to be of a large party that were to sup with me after the play was over.

The distant respect which Mr. Calcraft shewed towards me during the evening, induced me to imagine I had been mistaken in the conjecture I had formed. And as he was the first of the company that went away, and had been rallied, during supper, relative to some lady he was partial to, I was convinced that I had been in an error.

The next morning I went to take a walk in the park; where a servant of Mr. Metham's came up to me, and informed me that his

master was come to town, and desired to speak to me at his lodgings. As it was but a step from the park, I immediatly went. In my way I saw, to my great surprise, Mr. Calcraft and the person who had offended me the evening before. I afterwards found that Mr. Calcraft had paid the stranger an early visit in the morning, and insisted on his either asking my pardon, or exchanging a shot with him. The poor man, who did not even recollect, when he awoke, how he had got the bruises he felt, could not at first be persuaded that any thing had happened to occasion this requisition. Nor even if the affront had really been given, did he conceive there was any occasion to make an apology to an *actress*. Mr. Calcraft, however, convincing him that there was a necessity for either one or the other, the Hibernian (for of that kingdom he happened to be) wisely preferred the former.

He accordingly prepared to attend his unwelcome visitor. They had been at my house, and hearing I was gone to the Park, were making the best of their way to Mr. Metham's lodgings, where Mr. Calcraft judged I might call in. We all entered together; and the stranger made an awkward apology; uttering something, at the same time, about the delicacy of an actress—A set of wretches, that he seemed to think, might at any time be offended with impunity. Mr. Metham no
sooner

sooner heard this, than he said to him, with great solemnity, "Sir, that lady is to be my wife!" So unexpected a declaration frightened the poor Irishman, who thought he had met with Don Quixote himself; and he took his leave as soon as he possibly could. For Mr. Metham had an air of consequence, when he pleased to assume it, that was sufficient to strike awe and terror into a braver man than my insulter seemed to be.

When the stranger was gone, instead of thanking Mr. Calcraft for having rescued me from the insults of an intoxicated brute; with all the *hauteur* of an eastern monarch, Mr. Metham asked him what right he had to insist himself as my champion. My surprise at this fresh absurdity was greater than I can express; for I expected, as he certainly ought to have done, that he would have loaded my protector with thanks, for having guarded me during his absence.

But the mystery was soon unravelled. By what dropt in the conversation which ensued, I found, that having unluckily called at my house, he had been informed by my maid (of whose partiality to him, and disrespect to me, I have already made mention) not only of the *tete-à-tete* which had taken place at so unseasonable an hour, the night before, between Mr. Calcraft and myself, but of his walking in the street during the whole of the night after our quarrel. Whilst this

H. 6. information

information made me acquainted, that Mr. Calcraft was the identical person whom I had a casual view of from my window, and evinced his attachment to me more than any other circumstance had done, it accounted for Mr. Metham's present behaviour. The intelligence he had thus obtained from my servant, added to Mr. Calcraft's sudden return to town, awakened all his jealousy, and convinced him of his new friend's duplicity. The effect this discovery, and the altercation which ensued, had upon me, was greater than my spirits were able to bear; I accordingly fainted away. When I came to myself, I heard that a challenge had been the consequence, and that General Burton and Colonel Heywood were to be the seconds; but what was the result of their meeting I never heard, as fortune disposed of me for some time in a manner I little expected.

As my benefit was to be the Saturday following, the consequent employment which I had upon my hands, prevented me from seeing either of my heroes but at a distance, during the interim. I had made choice of "Venice Preserved." The house was crowded, and the applause uncommon. Mr. Murray (now Earl Mansfield) sat near Mr. Fox, and after expressing great satisfaction at the performance in general, concluded with saying, "I came to admire Garrick, but go away enchanted with Bellamy." Mr. Fox, always

ways happy to be the harbinger of good news, came to inform me of this most flattering circumstance of my whole theatrical career. You may be assured I was not a little elevated with receiving the approbation of so great and sensible a man. Mr. Garrick being in the Green-room, at the time Mr. Fox delivered me the pleasing intelligence, he beheld the honour that was thus conferred upon me with an envious eye; and it confirmed that dislike he already had imbibed for me. For more apprehensive of a rivalry in fame, than an eastern monarch of his power, he could not bear, *even a sister* near the throne.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R XLVIII.

Oct. 30, 17—.

THE fatigue both of body and mind I had gone through the preceding day, occasioned me to lie longer in bed than usual, the morning after my benefit. I had given my servants orders not to admit Mr. Metham if he came. But he was the master, and would not be denied. He accordingly made his way to my bed room, and came up to the side of my bed, with a look as frantic as if he had just escaped from Dr. Monro's. Then looking stedfastly at me, he asked me if I would
live

live with him again? Upon my answering in a determined tone of voice that I would not, he drew his hanger, and swore by his maker that I should then die with him. Very fortunately my little boy was playing in the room; who, upon seeing the shining weapon held over me, he screamed out, "Oh my "mama! my mama!"

This exclamation of his child awakening a gleam of tenderness, and observing that I was deprived of my senses, he came a little to his. As soon as I was recovered, he tried by threats and imprecations to prevail upon me to lay aside the resolution I had formed, and to renew our late intimacy; but in vain. I was not to be moved. Intimidation, as I have before observed, never had any weight with me. Finding this method would not succeed, he had recourse to milder means. He intreated; he prayed; and made use of every winning argument the utmost tenderness could suggest. This mode of proceeding was much more likely to answer his purpose than the other. Yet I still resisted every offer, even that of his immediate hand; together with the most solemn assurance that he would endeavour to atone for the offence he had given me, by the most unremitting attention during the whole of his life.

Upon my still obstinately persisting in my refusal, his phrenzy again returned. I repeatedly desired him to leave me; and nothing,

thing, but his excessive tenderness, and the fear that I might be once more deprived of my senses, could have induced him to comply with my request. At length, however, seeing the situation to which I was reduced, he went away. But this was only on condition that I would permit him to return in two hours. As he went out, he gave the servants strict orders not to suffer any person whatsoever to see me. He then, as I afterwards learnt, proceeded to his lodgings, where he found Major Burton, who had been some time in London, and had postponed his return to France on account of the distraction of his friend.

The moment he was gone, I dispatched my maid upon a sleeveless errand to one of my female acquaintances. And to prevent any apprehensions that might arise in her mind from being sent out, I told her I was so ill, that I would endeavour to compose myself till she returned. But instead of doing this, she was no sooner out of my room, than I arose, and putting on the first cloaths I could find, I ran more dead than alive, like a distracted woman, into the street. The people, at this time, it being Sunday, were just coming from church. And seeing a young creature, in a dress not adapted to walking in the streets, and with a wildness in her looks, they naturally concluded I was deprived of my senses.

As I went along, I was composed enough to recollect that my mother's lodgings, or the residence of any one of my intimates, could not furnish me with a refuge, as those would be the first places my pursuer would search for me in, when he was acquainted with my flight. I therefore winged my steps to Southampton-street, to the house where I lodged when I first returned from Ireland; which was the same as the worthy Gansels had taken up their abode in. Mrs. Smith, the mistress of it, did every thing in her power to compose me. And after she had got me some breakfast, went herself to my mother to inform her of my being there. This precaution proved well-timed, as Mr. Metham was at her lodgings, and raving like a madman. He had been at Mr. Calcraft's house, as he concluded he was the lure that had tempted me to fly. But being assured that I was not there, he continued his researches. Mr. Calcraft, upon hearing I had absented myself, experienced nearly the same tormenting sensations that Metham did. Love and jealousy made *him* suppose that I had put myself under the protection of Lord Downe; his Lordship possessing every attraction which captivates our sex. He consequently felt little less from his jealous apprehensions than Mr. Metham experienced.

My mother, after promising Mr. Metham that she would inform him of my retirement

as soon as she had discovered it, came to me. She would have been better pleased, had I accepted of what had been so long the grand object of *her* constant solicitations, and of *my* wishes, now it was offered to me; but as Metham was in the frantic state she found him to be, and danger might have attended my continuing any longer at home, she did not entirely disapprove of my precipitate flight.

The passion week, very fortunately for me, was the succeeding one to that in which I had experienced such a variety of perturbations. To obtain a little respite from these, and to avoid the frantic Metham, till he should be restored to a greater degree of tranquillity, I determined to seize this opportunity of paying a visit to my friends at Donnalán Park. Mrs. Smith, who had likewise received a pressing invitation from the hospitable owners of that mansion, when they were at her house, agreed to accompany me.

Accordingly we set out the next day, in a hired post-chaise; and on our arrival were received by Mr. and Mrs. Gansel with the greatest cordiality. In the old gentleman it was more than cordiality; it amounted to transport. He even declared that the pleasure of seeing me would add ten years to his life; as he felt himself regenerated by it. He overpowered me with the profusion of
praise

praise with which he loaded me. So that all those who were present, supposed that I not only surpassed the Oldfield and Porter of *his* time, but equalled the inimitable *Cibber* of *ours*; a pitch of excellence to which I could scarcely hope to arrive. My youth, indeed, claimed the indulgence of the public, and this they were pleased to bestow with a more lavish hand than, I fear, my merit deserved.

The unfeigned marks of pleasure which were to be seen in the countenances of the master and mistress, diffused itself through the whole family; and all the domestics seemed to wish to surpass each other in their attention towards me. I found myself in a terrestrial paradise, where every thing proclaimed it to be the abode of peace, innocence and delight.—Mr. Gansel, who from the frequent attacks of the gout to which he was subject, was an invalid, usually retired at eight o'clock, and left his dame to entertain their company at supper. At dinner he always took the lead, and not only kept Mrs. Gansel silent, but saved her the trouble of doing the offices of the table. But notwithstanding this was his usual custom, in order to shew me every respect in his power, the evening of my arrival, he declared he would sit up if he never did on another. It was in vain that I united my intreaties with those of his Lady and the company,

company, that he would not risk his health by staying up after his accustomed hour. He said, he felt so much satisfaction from seeing his admired Juliet at Donnalán Park, that nothing should induce him to leave her till she retired to rest.

I was not a little amazed to hear the old gentleman order for supper, three boiled chickens, three roasted, three broiled, and the cold chicken pye. Such catering, where there seemed to be a variety of every thing necessary to please the appetite, carried with it the appearance of a peculiar species of oddity. Nor did his interference in his lady's province seem less singular. And though such a quantity of provisions of the same quality was ordered, the company consisted only of eight persons.

During supper, a gloom overclouded the countenance of Mrs. Gansel, which, I likewise could not account for. Her invitation had been as pressing as that of her husband, and the pleasure she shewed on my alighting from the carriage, had all the appearance of sincerity.—What can occasion these mysteries thought I! They were, however, at length cleared up.

When Mrs. Gansel did me the honour to shew me to my apartment, she apologized for the indifferent supper I had sat down to. She said, she had provided one much more suitable to those I had been accustomed to,
but

but her lord and master, having in his young days made an oath, never to have at his table, when he himself was present, but one dish, or rather, only food of the same quality, excepting vegetable and fruit pyes; she had been obliged that evening to conform to his humour. I told her, as that was the case, I could not conceive how he could entertain such numbers as frequented his table, and preserve his resolution, unless he roasted a whole ox. She replied, that on the morrow my curiosity would be fully gratified, as his brethren of the quorum were to dine there. She then assured me, that as she found supper to be my principal meal, I should have one of a different nature from the dinner, as long as I did them the favour to stay; Mr. Gansel giving her permission to please herself in that point, when he was not present. I own the oddity of my new friend, and the innocent frankness of his wife, gave me as much entertainment, at that juncture, as my harrassed mind could be susceptible of.

G. A. B.

LET-

LETTER XLIX.

November 9, 17—.

THE next morning I got up to contemplate the beauties of a place, which seemed to abound with every thing that was convenient and elegant. The first thing which struck my notice, and which I had not observed, through my fatigue the night before, was the furniture and hangings of the room in which I slept; these, as well as the bed and the window-curtains, were of blue sattin, with borders composed of flowers cut out of fine point lace, such as was formerly worn. This had the most beautiful effect of any thing I had ever seen of the kind.

The house was small, but very convenient; there were, however, apartments at the Pheasantry, an adjacent building, which could be occupied upon any particular occasion. The kitchen was large and well furnished. The pantry was supplied with every thing that could gratify the taste of the greatest epicure. The neatness of the dairy proclaimed that the mistress had an eye over it. The park, though well stocked, was kept so clean, that it had the appearance of a kitchen-garden. The menagerie, which contained many sorts of curious beasts, was taken great care of. The house was pleasantly

fantly situated, but what conduced to make it more so was, that from the parlour window you have a view of the lighters and boats passing and repassing on the neighbouring river, which formed a most beautiful moving picture.

And yet the worthy possessors of this delightful residence were not happy. They found a great alloy to their comfort from their only son, Colonel Gansel's obstinately refusing to comply with their wishes, in marrying. This occasioned much regret to his parents, who were apprehensive that from his living and dying in a state of celibacy, their estate, which they had taken so much pains to improve for him, should devolve to strangers.—Such is the lot of mortals.—Some darksome cloud or other will intercept the beams of happiness.—We *vainly* flatter ourselves with tasting unimbittered pleasures.—To every state and condition are annexed its advantages and disadvantages.—Even a monarch, “sleeping in perfumed chambers, “under the canopies of costly state, and “lulled with sounds of sweet melody,” sometimes can envy the peaceful slumbers of the meanest wretch—And like the Fourth Harry, exclaim,

* “Can’st thou, O partial sleep, give thy repose

“To

* Henry 4th, Second Part, Act 3d, Scene 1st.

“To the wet sea-boy in the rudest hour?”

“And, in the calmest and the stillest night,

“With all appliances and means to boot,

“Deny it to a king?”—

Though I had set out on my ramble over this delightful spot soon after breakfast, I was so enchanted by the different parts of it, and led on from one beauty to another, that dinner was ready before I returned. I was of course obliged to make my appearance among the, “grave and reverent signiors,” who composed the party, in my dishabile. The master of the house, surrounded by his consequential brethren, waited my return on his crutches; and gently chid me for preventing the venison from being served. Upon examining the contents of the table, I observed that it consisted of a large haunch of venison at the top, another at the bottom, a pasty on each side, with French beans, &c. &c. in the middle.

As I had always had a dislike to venison, I was apprehensive I should not be able to make a dinner. But complaisance obliging me to conceal this peculiarity, I tasted it, and found it to be the most delicious viand I had ever partaken of. The desert made up in variety for the sameness of the dinner. After sitting till the bottle began to circulate, I made a motion to retire. When the
master

master of the feast, who sat next to me, gave me a gentle tap, adding at the same time, "fit still my dear girl; we never say any thing women would blush to hear. And I can see no reason for ladies retiring after the first or second glass, without it arises from an apprehension of something of that nature, or that the men propose to make themselves brutes."

This sentiment, which would have done honour to the most refined understanding, pleased me so much, that it was with difficulty I refrained from kissing the hand that had tapped me.—The want of decency, indeed, argues a want of sense. It is very hard that women should be excluded, as they too frequently are at the politest tables, from sharing in the mirth and conviviality, usually attendant on the circulation of the bottle, because some gentlemen cannot refrain from mingling with their wit, what must give offence to a delicate mind!—With men of true genius and perfect good breeding, the mental bowl, (as my much lamented friend Thomson terms it) is more plyed than the bottle.—Their feasts not only tend to the refreshment of the body, but furnish food for the soul.—And as the intellectual bowl, though elevating, does not possess the intoxicating power of the juice of the grape, the wit and humour it inspires, are seldom tinged with indelicacy.

At

At Mr. Quin's petit soupers, which were honoured with the presence of some of the brightest geniuses of the age, nothing escaped that could offend a female ear. There the conversation was delicate, lively, and interspersed with every thing that could improve the understanding, as well as delight the heart—Some expressions, not altogether becoming the lips of this best of men, have been, I know, imputed to him. And from the luxuriancy of his imagination, some might have escaped him in an unguarded moment. But these *jeux d'esprits* have, I doubt not been multiplied; and many have obtained the sanction of his name which owed not their being to him.

Colonel Gansel joined us in the evening; and as his mother doated upon him, the fatted calf was killed. Upon this occasion Mrs. Gansel gave evident proofs that she had made Mrs. Glass's art of cookery her study. The next day as we were sitting at dinner, the old gentleman was informed that a stranger wished to speak with him, Upon his sending out word that he would be glad if the gentleman would walk in, he received a note acquainting him, that as the business was of a very particular and pressing nature, the writer begged to have the honour of speaking to him.

Mr. Gansel, who added curiosity to his other qualities, gave orders that one of the

four dishes which were on the table, (four being his usual number) should be kept warm for himself and visitor. He then desired us to proceed with our dinner, as from the contents of the note, it was uncertain how long he should be detained. The air he assumed as he said this, seemed to affect his son very visibly. I observed that he changed colour, and appeared to be much agitated. After some time the bell rang, and the reserved dish was ordered to be served up to Mr. Gansel and his guest. Mrs. Gansel going out at the same time, she soon returned, and smiling on her son, said to him, "you need not be alarmed, your father is in high good humour. You are not the first son that has fallen in love without the leave of his parents." From this I learnt the cause of the Colonel's anxiety. And was further informed afterwards, that he had been for some time privately married to a person, to his union with whom he had but little hope of obtaining his father's consent.

The Colonel had brought down with him a beautiful white bull, as an addition to his father's menagerie. It was the most extraordinary creature of the kind I ever saw. After dinner we went into the park to view it. Whilst I was there, a servant came to inform me that his master requested to speak with me. As I supposed the old gen-

tleman

tleman only wanted me, through his fondness for my company, to join in the conversation, I was not very well pleased with this mark of distinction. I had much rather have remained with the party I was in, and continued my walk; but, notwithstanding my reluctance, I obeyed the invitation.

This being my idea relative to the cause of the message I had just received, I went into the room where Mr. Gansel was, without any other suspicion. When, to my inexpressible surprise, I saw Mr. Calcraft with him. I had no sooner entered than the old gentleman taking me by the hand, and his new visitor by his, introduced him to me in the following words: "Here, my dear, is your protector from a madman. This is a gentleman of honour, and he proposes, with your consent, to make you happy for life."

He then shewed me a paper; but, without explaining the contents of it, rung the bell, and ordered a servant to go to his attorney, and desire him to come immediately. The servant soon returned, and informed his master that the attorney he usually employed was not at home, but that Mr. ——— (I have forgot the name of the other) was. "No! no!" exclaimed the old gentleman, "he will not do. I do not want a fellow to come and dine with me, and then charge me for his company. Do you know,

"Sir," said he, turning to Mr. Calcraft,
"that I frequently asked that man to dine
"with me in the same manner I may do
"any other of my neighbours, and the
"scoundrel, besides cramming himself with
"the best that my table afforded, charged
"me thirteen shillings and four pence for
"every time he did me the honour to visit
"me, till it amounted to the sum of two
"hundred pounds. But you are in no haste,"
continued he; "my attorney will return in
"the evening, and then the business shall be
"concluded."

My confusion at so unexpected a proposal
deprived me of the power of speech. Upon
which Mr. Gansel went on to inform me that
Mr. Calcraft, in whose praise he launched
out, had it not in his power to marry me
immediately, as his dependence on Mr. Fox
prevented him from doing so. But that the
paper he held in his hand was the copy of
a contract of marriage, in which Mr. Calcraft
had engaged, under the forfeiture of fifty
thousand pounds, to make me his wife with-
in the term of six or seven years; in which
time, from every appearance, there was no
doubt of his acquiring such an independency
as would enable him to avow his situation.
But at present he could not suffer the cere-
mony to be performed, as his patron had
enjoined him, upon pain of his displeasure,
and the loss of his support, not to enter into

a serious engagement with a woman in public life. That as these were the sentiments of the man to whom he was indebted for his present affluence, and on whom his future prospects depended, he thought he was bound in gratitude to obey his injunctions on this head. Therefore, though he loved me to distraction, he had too great a regard to his honour, which he had pledged to his patron, to purchase even me at the expence of it. As things were in such a situation, he had thought of this method as the only one by which he could secure *me*, and keep his own word.

I heard with patience Mr. Gansel repeat his visitor's reasons for his present conduct; but he had no sooner done so, than I expressed in the strongest terms my dissatisfaction to the latter, at taking the liberty of troubling either Mr. Gansel or myself upon the subject. I then assured him that I was firmly resolved never to form any connection whatsoever, and desired he would let me hear no more of his addresses. I was now about to leave the room; when Mr. Calcraft, who was visibly affected at my determination, stepped between me and the door, and endeavoured to prevent me from going.

Offended at this freedom, passion got the better of good manners, and, I am almost ashamed even at this distant period to indite it, I struck him. The thought of having

demeaned myself so much, operated so forcibly on my mind, that I burst into tears; and I felt myself more confounded at having given the blow, than Zanga did at receiving one. Mr. Calcraft vented his feelings in sighs and groans; and the old gentleman was almost distracted. At length, the latter having compelled me to sit down, he expatiated upon Mr. Metham's ungentleman-like treatment of me. By this means, he said, my veracity was doubted; my reputation blasted; and I was every moment liable to fall a sacrifice to a madman's jealousy. In short, he painted my situation in such lively colours, that I now trembled as much from fear, as I had just done from anger; and I sat deprived of the power of speech or motion.

When Mr. Calcraft found he had so warm an advocate in Mr. Gansel, he thought it would further his suit, if he left him to plead his cause alone. He accordingly apologized to the old gentleman for his abrupt departure, by making business his excuse. He further told him, that he feared the same reason would impede his visiting Donnan-Park again for some time, unless he should honour him with the pleasing intelligence of my consenting to be his. This he begged he would strive by every means in his power to obtain, and as soon as he had done so he would fly to execute the deed.

He

He added that his affection for me made him unhappy to a degree on my account, as he knew not what would be the consequence of my returning to London, without some person to protect me. This task he assured me he would undertake, if I would permit him, though at the hazard of his life. He then, as I made him no answer, took his leave.

Happy was I when he left the room. The agitation, however, that I had undergone during this disgusting trial, threw me into a fever; and as the Passion week was expired before I recovered, Mr. Gansel was obliged to write to his son, who had returned to town; to desire he would wait on Mr. Garrick, to inform him of my inability to attend the duties of the theatre for some days. This the Colonel did, and found that my presence was not very requisite to the manager, as most of the nights were appropriated to benefits. — Surely never woman experienced such a succession of anxieties and troubles — I was born to be unfortunate. — And every incident, even at this early period of my life, tended to fulfil the fatal decree. — Prepare yourself, therefore, to meet in the sequent pages a variety of sorrows, thinly, very thinly, sprinkled with comforts — But I will not anticipate.

G. A. B.

LETTER L.

Nov. 20, 17—.

MR. GANSEL soothed, advised, and used every art to induce me to accept of what he termed happiness; and when my indisposition was at the height, he attended me rather like an old nurse, than a man of an affluent fortune, and one who had sat so many sessions in parliament.

At length I received a letter from my mother, wherein she informed me, that she had let Mr. Metham know the place of my retirement, with which he seemed perfectly satisfied. That she found his exasperation against me, proceeded more from the wound his pride had received by the supposition of his having a rival, than from the fervour of his affection. She added, that it was reported he had renewed his intimacy with a demi-rep of quality, to whom he had formerly been devoted. And concluded with saying, that she had every reason to believe, from what she had heard, that, were I now to relax from my severity, (judging from the indifference with which he spoke of me) he did not mean to marry me.

This letter, this fatal letter, strengthened by Metham's silence, when he knew, or was supposed

supposed to know, the place of my refuge; renewed my resentment against him, which for some time had been upon the wane; and put the finishing stroke to my undoing. For had I seen him before the union, to which I was so much solicited, had taken place, though I might not have consented to be his, I never could have been another's. Thus by the most cruel deception, (for a deception I afterwards found it to be, and my mother the innocent means by which it was rendered effectual) was I made the dupe of my resentment.

That passion now exerting its greatest power over my mind, and my well-meaning temper, Mr. Gansel, making use of every art to obtain my consent, to be the future wife of Mr. Calcraft, I could not withstand their united efforts. The writing was immediately copied, and a letter dispatched to require his attendance to sign and seal it.

But my consent was scarcely given, before the dear idea of the man I still loved, in spite of his unkind words; my first and only love; the father of my child; rushed, in its most pleasing form upon my mind, and banished every other object. My heart recoiled at the reluctant union I was about to enter into, and I determined to adhere to the resolution I had made, of avoiding a connection with any other man. My kind host no sooner was informed of this alteration in my sentiments,

than he endeavoured to combat it with his most powerful arguments. He represented to me, the absurdity of opposing my good fortune, which had thrown in my way an *assured* connection with a man, who was already in a good situation, and who bid fair to be soon in an opulent one. That it was foolish and childish in the extreme, to recall my promise when I had once given it. And, reserving his most forcible one till the last, he concluded with observing, that he wondered my *spirit*, which, upon almost every other occasion, was uncontrollable, could bear to be treated with indifference. This thought, added to the recollection of my reception at Tunbridge, which made me severely feel my degraded situation, aroused once more my resentment; and it "came o'er me as doth
"the raven o'er the infected house," till it totally deprived me of the power of making any further opposition.

I need not say that Mr. Calcraft soon reached Donnalán Park. The contract was immediately executed; and, except the omission of the ceremony, our nuptials were solemnized to the satisfaction of all parties, *but my poor self*. The old gentleman was as happy and as proud of his having succeeded in the negotiation, as if he had married a darling daughter to an hereditary prince. As for myself, I still, like the patriarch's dove, longed to return to that home, where
all

all my happiness had so long been deposited; and had I known the *real* situation of the man that had offended me, instead of waiting for his submission, I should myself have produced the olive branch, and have sued for peace. When we returned to town, the contract was left with Mr. Gansel, as a place of the greatest security, and as being lodged in the hands of one of my most zealous friends.

Upon my arrival in London, supposing Mr. Metham's state of mind to be such as it had been represented to me, I wrote to him to let him know that I had now placed an everlasting bar to any future union between myself and him. But how shall I relate it! I found, that instead of the unconcern I supposed him to have acquired, he had been confined to his bed, ever since our separation, by a violent fever, which he was at this time slowly recovering from. But upon the receipt of my letter, his disorder returned, and with it his delirium. So that he was now more frantic than ever. And in the paroxysms of his rage, he repeatedly attempted to destroy himself. He was, however, prevented from accomplishing his dreadful purpose, by the tender care of his friend Major Burton, and the vigilance of his faithful valet, who never left him.

The account my mother sent me relative to Mr. Metham's recovered coolness, and of

his renewing his connection with the demirep of fashion, I afterwards discovered, was communicated to her by my servant, whose disregard for me I have more than once mentioned, and who had been gained over to his interest by Mr. Calcraft. But this manœuvre, though it answered the purpose in some degree, by bringing about the union he wished for, did not in the long run, (as will be seen) insure him the happiness he expected. The very falsehood and deception made use of upon these occasions, are always sure to counteract the purposes they have been designed to serve. Pleasures which are acquired by truth and honour will alone prove satisfactory and lasting.

A few days after my being in town, I was told that Sherrad, Mr. Metham's valet, wanted to speak to me. He had brought me a letter. The poor fellow with tears in his eyes informed me, that his master was still confined to his bed, and would certainly die, if I did not see him, and give him some comfort. He told me that he raved continually about me, wishing to call me his once more, and conjuring me on his knees to be reconciled to him. When I assured Sherrad that it was too late, as my fate was already determined, the kind creature exclaimed, "Then we are all undone; my poor little master and all." Having said this, he hung his head oppressed with sorrow and dejection.

This

This unaffected tenderness in the servant, and his mentioning my dear child, whom he loved as if he had been his own, was more than I could bear. It harrowed up my soul. I rushed from him, to hide my agonizing sensations; and in my distraction reproached both my mother and Calcraft for having joined to deceive and betray me. The effect of these exquisite sensations was too much for my strength, and I fell senseless on the floor. From thence I was conveyed to my room, in a state of frantic grief, little short of Metham's, and considering myself a wretched creature, lost for ever to the world.

When Mr. Metham's faithful valet returned, and gave his master an account of what had passed, his distraction increased; and in a fit of real madness, for nothing but madness could dictate such an epistle, as he now knew the insurmountable obstacles which intervened, repeated his promise of marriage if I would return to him; and conjuring me at the same time, by our past happiness, to permit him to fulfil it.

The perturbations I had been thrown into by Sherrad's visit, added to the other severe trials I had before undergone, continued for some days to keep my mind in a state of frantic confusion; but they were too violent to last long. They at length subsided, and gave way to a stupor which threatened idiotism. As I had not, amidst all this, answered
Mr.

Mr. Metham's letter, he was so displeased at the omission, that he sent for his son from my mother, and placed him with Mrs. Dives, his sister. This, however, gave me no additional uneasiness, as the infinite obligations that lady lay under to her brother, as well as the tenderness with which I had treated her children whilst they were with me, insured a return of affection to my little boy; who was now two years and a quarter old.

You see me now entered into a new track of life; and will, I doubt not, do me the justice to acknowledge, that a train of events contributed towards it, which it was scarcely in the power of human prudence to counteract.—I have indeed, to blame myself, as I have had occasion to do more than once before, for *precipitation*, To my precipitation in making the rash vow I did, never to have any further intimacy with Mr. Metham, and to my obstinate adherence to that vow, notwithstanding his penitence and promise of an honourable atonement, am I indebted in a great measure for the fatal consequences which ensued.—“There is,” as Shakspeare tells us, “a tide in the affairs of men, (and why not of women?) which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.”—But how are poor mortals to know when this successful tide begins its course? Was it, indeed, to rush with the impetuous Hygra of the Severn, we may then be assured of
its

its having taken place. But as it commonly flows in a gentle stream, and rises by degrees, its advance is imperceptible. The consequence of which is, that being unnoticed by the greater part of mankind, particularly those possessed of enlarged minds, the opportunity is "omitted, and all the voyage of "their life is bound in shallows, and in mi-
"series."

I will not pay so ill a compliment to *your* taste, as to suppose the frequent quotations I make from my favourite Shakspeare, most of whose female characters I have filled, prove disgusting to you; nor will I pay myself so ill a compliment, as to imagine you accuse me of applying them improperly. They are so consonant to my own sentiments, and expressed in a manner so infinitely beyond the reach of my pen, that I cannot help making use of them whenever they occur to my memory, and appear to be apropos.

G. A. B.

 LETTER LI.

Dec. 29, 17—

A LONG chasm in the prosecution of my narrative has taken place, contrary to my wishes.—Troubles, vexation and illness, one the consequence of the other, must plead my excuse. I am, however,
thank

thank Heaven! so far recovered as to be able to sit up. I shall of course employ every hour, that my aching head and aching heart will allow, in prosecuting the task I have undertaken. As I design my narrative for the inspection of the public, as well as yourself, I shall continue it with as much speed as possible; the sooner to clear myself from the imputations with which I have been undeservedly loaded. Nor will I doubt but when they are acquainted with the *real sources* of my misfortunes, they will judge of them with more lenity, and give me credit for some good qualities which have hitherto lain hid under the miry incrustations of slander

My illness, from the agitations recounted in my last letter, obliged Mr. Ross to postpone his benefit, at which I was to appear in the character of Juliet, and he in Romeo. Mr. Garrick, upon this, wished him to change that play for one in which my presence was not necessary. He at the same time hinted to me, that it would be degrading to my consequence to appear with an inferior actor. But as I was always of opinion that the greater the consequence of the performer the more incumbent it was upon them to assist with their abilities the community to which they belonged, I revolted at the idea, and by this generous sentiment, increas-

ed

ed the disgust which the manager already entertained for me.

For my benefit this season, I had the farce of the "Oracle," acted by Lilliputians, in which I introduced the justly celebrated Miss Pope; whose character in private life, excels, if possible, her allowed merit on the stage.

Mr. Quin, hearing I was dangerously ill, came to town, at once to see me, and to complete an act of generosity, the recital of which, as it redounds so much to the honour of my worthy friend, claims a place here. He had performed, the season before, the part of Falstaff, for the benefit of his old acquaintance, Mr. Ryan. This testimony of regard had the desired effect; and the actor profited greatly by the exhibition. His success upon this occasion, induced Ryan to solicit the same favour this year. The application produced an answer from Quin, which, whilst it is in the true laconic style, is rich in meaning; I shall therefore give it verbatim.

"I would play for you if I could; but will not *whistle* for you. I have willed you a thousand pounds. If you want money, you may have it, and save my executors trouble.

Bath, March 1st.

"JAMES QUIN."

This instance of his friendship to an indigent contemporary, if possible, increased my esteem

esteem for him. When he came to see me, I told him the situation of my mind; and found great relief from unbosoming myself to the good man. He advised me to be easy if I could not be happy. He entertained, I found, in common with every one else, a high opinion of Mr. Calcraft's probity and rectitude. And though he admitted that we were not congenial souls, yet it was in my power, he said, as his affection for me appeared to be great, to bring him to my bent.

This, I own, might have been the case could I have returned his passion; but with the indifference I felt for him, such an effect was not to be expected. Mr. Calcraft and myself may be justly said, to be *joined, not matched*. For, with a soul of fire like mine, and thoughts which out-stripped the wind; to be *happily* united to a being, who was only sensible of the effects of passion, but totally unacquainted with the delicate sensations of an exalted affection, was a consummation not to be hoped for.

A pure and delicate love, where "two fond hearts in one unite;" without being refined into what is usually termed *platonick* love, deviates not, however, into the contrary extreme.—A thousand nameless pleasures, which the merely sensual can form no idea of, constitute the happiness of such. A look, a word, a touch, conveys exquisite sensations

sensations to the soul. But their *supreme* pleasure consists in rendering the beloved object happy by *every* means in their power.—Divested of each selfish thought, they make the happiness of the person thus adored, the medium of their own. And when the enchanted soul, by these intellectual enjoyments is elevated to a pitch nearly beyond humanity, enjoyments dependent on the senses, restore it by gradual steps to its wonted tranquil state.—Such are my ideas of love; that is, of a sincere and disinterested affection.—I doubt not but they will be termed *romantic*; as they are, to express myself in the words of Shakspeare, which I have already applied to susceptibility in general) “caviare to the million.”

To the indifferences I entertained for Mr. Calcraft, he was, however, indebted for the greatest part of his fortune; for could he have inspired me with a love for him, a mind active as mine, and ardent in its pursuits, would have been lost in the sweet delirium. In lieu of which, I now bent all my thoughts on the duties of my profession, and on promoting the emoluments of his. And I might be truly said to suffer love, but not feel it.

It could not be expected that any of Mr. Metham's particular friends would notice me after what had passed. I therefore, for a time, lost the friendship of Mr. Brudenell; he
has,

has, indeed, since done me repeated favours; but he never honoured me with a visit, except just calling on me twice to render me some services. Major Burton, Colonel Sandford, and Captain Shaftoe, were men of the world, and considered their own convenience, more than their friend's romantic agonies.

Mr. Metham's despair made him form a resolution of going abroad, to revenge my perfidy, as he termed it, on the whole sex. He had made the graces his study, whilst a *Cantab*, more than the classics. And lest there should be a tinge of college rust remaining, he had completed his studies at the Academie Royal at Paris. He was generous without being *liberal*. Being a perfect master, as the French express themselves, of the *du monde*, he knew perfectly well how to lay himself out to please. He at the same time possessed a tolerable share of vanity, which prevented that false modesty the learned are often addicted to. And though no great adept in the dead languages, he was so well versed in the living, as to be able, when in company with ladies, to substitute flowery fiction in the place of truth. With these attractions, aided by a fine figure and an elegant address, he might well expect success with the fair sex; particularly with *les petite maitresses de Paris*. And I had soon the pleasure to hear that he had dropped his handkerchief at the feet of the *Gosin*. This lady I had formerly intended to eclipse
by

by my transcendent talents, when I proposed captivating the *Grand Monarque*. Instead of which I was now dwindled down into a passive, thoughtful, (and as I imagined) a good wife.

At the conclusion of the theatrical campaign, Mr. Calcraft took a little box at Twickenham, called Ragman's Castle, where we spent the summer. His affection seemed to be increased by my indifference. As I had lost my two female friends by death, I had but few fair visitants. When we were in town we still lived in separate houses, as Mr. Digby, (the late lord of that name) had an apartment in Mr. Calcraft's house in Brewer-street.

Mr. Garrick wished to enter into an engagement with me for the next season, in order to prevent Barry from having any female performer to play with him, who could stand against Mrs. Cibber, whom he himself had engaged; Mrs. Woffington was returned from Ireland, but she was out of his line of acting. Mrs. Cibber and I had contracted an intimacy of the most friendly kind. For, notwithstanding the great marks of approbation I was honoured with by the public; whenever the merits of that lady were mentioned, I always spoke my real sentiments, and acknowledged her indubitable superiority.

Mr. Clutterbuck, an intimate acquaintance of the manager's, was deputed as ambassador

dor upon this occasion. He had power to offer me not only an increase of salary, but the parts of Juliet, Desdemona, and Calista; which Mrs. Cibber condescended to resign in my favour, to induce me to continue in the company. I however insisted on the article which at present subsisted, and which was not yet expired, being given up; as it was now void by Mr. Garrick's having engaged Mrs. Cibber. When I had entered into this engagement, conscious of the great superiority of that inimitable actress, which I thought would throw me at an infinite distance, I had insisted on this circumstance being particularly specified in it.

The numerous patrons and patronesses who honoured me with their protection, and still declared warmly in my favour, made my desertion much feared by the patentees of Drury-lane, and courted by the proprietors of Covent-garden. With the latter at length I engaged, in defiance of the advice of all my friends, and the most earnest solicitations of Mrs. Cibber. There seems to have been some evil genius presiding over me during my whole life, which has frustrated every opportunity of doing well that offered in my favour. In this case, my determination was peculiarly ill-judged; as my continuing to play with Garrick would have improved me, and through Mrs. Cibber's frequent confinements from indisposition, which

to my knowledge were real and not feigned, as represented, would have afforded me as many opportunities as I could have wished for, of endeavouring to merit the indulgence which the public so lavishly honoured me with.

Here I could load myself with censure, and that with the greatest reason, for this injudicious conduct; and thereby anticipate the reflections which will naturally arise in the minds of every one to whose knowledge it comes. I could likewise attempt an extenuation of it. I shall, however, only relate the fact, and add to it, by way of comment, an admonition against yielding to the dictates of self-confidence, which generally chooses wrong, when opposed to the advice of unprejudiced friends.

At our return to town on the approach of the season, Lord Digby being gone abroad, and Mr. Calcraft being fearful of the return of *the hot-headed Percy* from his tour, he prevailed upon me to reside with him at his house. As I really thought it a duty incumbent on me to oblige him in every thing that lay in my power, I readily consented. His fondness seemed rather to increase than abate, and there was every appearance of our passing our lives as quietly and comfortably together as old Darby and Joan did.

Upon my removal, he informed me of the amount of his income. I was greatly sur-
prised

prised when he mentioned the sum, as it was not equal to my own, including my benefit, which was indeed incredible, and by my connection with him would in all probability be greatly augmented. He now asked me what allowance I thought would be necessary for our joint house-keeping. Without making any calculation, I replied, one hundred guineas a quarter; to which he readily agreed.

As it was so long since I received the bank-notes, and my unknown friend had never given me the least hint by which I might know from whom they came, I thought I might now make use of the thousand guineas. I accordingly did so. In the first place I paid every shilling that I owed. I then laid out the remainder in making an addition to my jewels. Thus free from every incumbrance, equipped with every elegance, and possessed of a great deal of plate, together with more diamonds than private gentlewomen generally are, I removed to Brewer-street, and became the domesticated wife of Mr. Calcraft.

I have mentioned these particulars to let the world as well as yourself see, that when I entered into this family union with Mr. Calcraft, instead of owing any debts that I could want his assistance to discharge, I was clear of the world, and possessed of an income superior to his own.—I cannot miss
this

this opportunity of repeating the assurances I gave you in my first letter, that my narrative should contain nothing but real facts.—I once more assure you, that truth shall guide my pen through every page. And if I happen to misrepresent even the minutest circumstance, it will arise rather from a want of discernment than of veracity.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R LII.

Jan. 12, 17—.

MR. FOX continued at this time Secretary at War, in which employment neither any of his predecessors nor successors have been held in greater estimation. He honoured me with his company often. And as I considered Mr. Calcraft's interest as my own, I made it my business to get acquainted with as many of the military as I could. In this I succeeded so well, that we had generally several officers of the first rank at our table.

General Braddock, to whom I had been known from my infancy, and who was particularly fond of me, was about this period appointed to go to America. From our intimacy, he gave me his agency without my applying for it. Whilst he was making

the necessary preparations for his voyage, he was more frequently than usual at our house. The evening before his departure he supped with me, accompanied by his two aids-de-camp, Major Burton, (who had just lost his much-loved wife, and my darling friend) and Captain Orme.

Before we parted, the general told me he should never see me more; for he was going with a handful of men to conquer whole nations; and to do this they must cut their way through unknown woods. He produced the map of the country, saying at the same time, "Dear Pop, we are sent like sacrifices to the altar." The event of the expedition too fatally verified the general's expectations. On going away he put into my hands a paper, which proved to be his will. As he did not doubt my being married to Mr. Calcraft, from his apparent fondness for me: from the alteration in my behaviour; and from the preference I had given to him before Mr. Metham; he made *him* his sole executor, leaving me only the plate which he had received as the usual perquisite from government on his nomination.

The season at Covent-Garden theatre was attended with success. It commenced with "Romeo and Juliet." Upon this piece Mr. Rich seemed to build the most flattering hopes, saying, "I have the Juliet now as well as the Romeo." From the concurrence

of people that crowded for seats, it appeared that he was not mistaken. However, when I, one night, observed this to him with a great degree of pleasure, he took a pinch of snuff, and turning upon his heel as if he was much dissatisfied, made this short reply; "Yes, "Mistress! but it is owing to the *procession*." Had I not had reason to believe that he had a sincere regard for me, I should have been offended at his oddity; but as it was, it rather diverted me.

It can scarcely be credited that the bare crossing the way, (for it can be called no otherwise) from Drury-lane to Covent-Garden) should excite the timidity of a performer of my standing. But it is really a fact, that notwithstanding the favour of the public towards me was more vehemently shown than ever, by repeated applause; though I retained my powers, I was under as strong apprehensions, as when I first deputed it under Mr. Rich's auspices in Monimia. I can only account for this extraordinary effect by supposing it arose from the consideration of my now having a reputation to *lose*, as at that time I had one to *gain*.

My pregnancy prevented this play from having an equal run with that which had attended it two seasons before. Mr. Garrick tried to stem the current of our success by purchasing a *new Bell* at an enormous expence; but finding that its harmonious notes

during the procession did not congregate the numbers he expected, he put it to a use which he was sure would be attended with profit; that was, in tolling for the execution of Pierre, in the piece where he and Cibber excelled beyond a possibility of competition. During my confinement, "Romeo and Juliet" was unavoidably obliged to be postponed, much to the regret of the manager. The last night of my performing, I could not ~~help~~ help advising him to introduce the procession, which according to his opinion, had been the sole means of filling the house, into some other piece. When taking another pinch of snuff, he said, "If I did not know to the contrary, I should suppose that the man in Brewer-street did not lead the most easy life."

Mr. Rich had accepted a tragedy from Doctor Francis, intitled "Constantine." This gentleman I have mentioned before as the * reputed translator of Horace, and the introducer on our stage of a French piece called "Eugenia;" in which I had the honour to represent the heroine; but as that lady died away unnoticed, I had almost forgot that I had done so. With the world of gaiety, which I had lately left, I had relinquished

* I have been credibly informed that this translation was the production of Mr. Duncomb.

my taste for dress; of which I had usually been, at the theatres, the sole arbitratress.

The character of the Empress Fulvia which I was to play in the Doctor's piece, reminded me of my darling foible. And as I had a certain sum allowed me by the manager to find my own dresses, I thought I would show that I still knew how to display upon proper occasions my genius in that line. I accordingly prepared to astonish and captivate all my beholders by the splendour of my Regalia. The piece had merit; but the similitude between the striking incident in "Othello" and that in "Constantine," was too conspicuous.

We had, however, no doubt of its success. For notwithstanding "Eugenia" was but short lived, yet as the author of it was known as the translator of Horace, and Barry's name with all the strength of the company was to support it, we expected the curiosity of the public would be excited thereby. However, to the great surprise of the whole theatrical corps, and to my great mortification, instead of a crowded house, we had the melancholy prospect of empty benches; and the court of the great Constantine was attended only by his own immediate suit. This was the first instance of the kind I ever knew or heard of; and to the present hour could never account for it.

Having been accustomed to be what is termed in the theatrical phrase, *followed*, I felt my vanity much hurt; and I determined to revenge myself upon the public, by providing for the neglected author. Accordingly I went to the Doctor, who sat almost, if not quite, dissolved in tears, for which the poor man felt another incentive than that of the disappointment of his vanity, and requested the favour of his company to supper. As I knew Mr. Fox would be there, I was in hopes of having an opportunity of introducing the unfortunate author to him before the company met. The event turned out to my wish; for on our entering the drawing-room we found him there alone. I immediately introduced my reverend to him, and having informed him of our disgrace, concluded with a request that he would immediately provide for him. As I had never solicited him before for a favour, my enforcing my present solicitation so earnestly, made him smile. He replied that he could only make him his chaplain to night, but desired he would breakfast with him in Conduit-street the next day. Then taking our neglected bard by the hand, he concluded, in the most complacent manner, by saying "Well Doctor! who knows but your damnation as a playwright, may be the means of your promotion as a divine!"

The

The very morning which followed that night, put a stop for some time to my appearance in public, as well as to my great attention to the business of Mr. Calcraft's profession, by the introduction of a daughter into the world. This event seemed of more consequence to Calcraft than if he had been made master of the world. He imagined the Marmoset to be already the very likeness of himself; and was in hopes that this pledge would insure to him my affection in future. Lady Caroline Fox, Lady Tyrawley, and Mr. Fox, stood sponsors in person. This circumstance put the certainty of my being married out of all doubt; as it was not to be supposed that I should have been so highly honoured had it been dubious. Indeed, it could scarcely be imagined that I would live upon any other terms, with a man who could not in any shape be put in competition with Mr. Metham, not only from the inferiority of his qualifications, but of his fortune, both in possession and expectation; the one being possessed of a large estate and property, with further expectancies, the other wholly dependent upon the patronage of the Secretary at War.

When I recovered from my lying-in, Mr. Calcraft, alarmed at a report that was spread of Mr. Metham's coming to England, requested that I would return the annuity he had settled on me; alledging the impropriety of

a woman *that was to be his wife*, and whom the world, as well as himself, esteemed to be so, having a settlement from any man but *himself*. To this I readily acceded. When he had received my consent, he told me, that in return for my kind condescension, he would settle an estate * of one hundred and twenty pounds a year, at Grantham, which he had just come into possession of by the death of his grandmother, upon me for my life, and afterwards upon my little girl Caroline Elizabeth. He at the same time gave me his will; in which he left me the interest of eleven thousand pounds in the funds, which he had accumulated whilst he was paymaster and contractor to the kings troops, during the rebellion in Scotland. A place he had been promoted to by the interest of Mr. Winnington, Mr. Fox's intimate friend.

In order to return the deed relative to Mr. Metham's annuity, I immediately sent to Mr. Moore, a gentleman for whom I had the most sincere regard on account of his many amiable qualities, and who, from the first of our acquaintance, had honoured me with a reciprocal return. To this gentleman I delivered the writing, requesting that he would return it into the hands of Mr. Metham upon his arrival in England. But from what reason I know not, this request was not

* This deed was executed in the year 1752.

complied

complied with. I can only compute it to the distraction of his thoughts.

These were, at this time, unfortunately absorbed by his affection for a married lady in Dublin. His enamorata had flattered him that she returned his passion; and had promised, as her husband was an inebriated brute, that upon their arrival in England, which was expected soon to take place, she would go off with him to the continent. Some new attachment, however, proving more agreeable to her, she was induced to alter her intention; and she wrote him word that she had done so.

Mr. Moore received this affecting intelligence whilst he was at dinner with a club of noblemen and gentlemen, at the King's Arms Tavern in Pall-Mall. Not being able to stand the shock, as his passion, though an illicit one, had taken full possession of his heart, he retired into another room, where in a fit of black despair, he put an end to his existence with a pistol. The company hearing the report, hastened to the place from whence it proceeded, and found him weltering in his blood. Lord Chedworth, who happened to be present, went to his lodgings, and sealing up his writings and valuables, sent to acquaint his nearest relation with the dreadful catastrophe. This person, who lived upon Ludgate-Hill, being his next heir, took possession of his

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effects,

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effects, as he died intestate. And with him the writings relative to Mr. Metham's annuity continued till my son, Captain Metham, came of age.

What made this event the more striking to me was, that he had been at my house in the morning. And Mrs. Molloy, a lady from Dublin, being upon a visit with me, we three had made a party for the evening, which was to commence early, that we might have a long *gamble* as he termed it. Mrs. Molloy and myself, accordingly returned from the Park, where we had been walking, sooner than usual; when to my unfeigned grief, and her great surprise, we were informed of the melancholy incident by the servant who opened the door to us. The poor fellow, as he told the shocking tale, shed tears; for as Mr. Moore almost lived in the family, and by the gentleness of his manners and his good nature had endeared himself to every one in it, there was not a person belonging to it, but what sincerely lamented his loss.

Thus through the coquetry of a woman, who was esteemed by her acquaintance as a pattern of virtue, was society deprived of one of the most accomplished, and admired young men about town. His loss was greatly regretted by every one that knew him, but by no one more truly than myself. For our friendship was of such a nature, that I believe we neither of us scarcely entertained a
thought,

thought, which was not communicated to the other, nor had a want that was not mutually supplied. At the same time, I declare, that I firmly believe he never indulged a wish which was inconsistent with the purest friendship for me. And with equal truth can I assert, that notwithstanding his qualifications were of the most attractive kind, I felt for him only as a brother.

This nice distinction between friendship and love, as I have already observed with regard to every species of susceptibility, is beyond the comprehension of the *million*. And to them the assertion I have here made, may appear to be devoid of truth. But a truly delicate mind, judging from its own purity, will readily conceive that a friendship might exist between two persons of different sexes, and be carried to the greatest height, without being impured by a sensual desire. From such I doubt not but the foregoing declaration will receive the readiest credit.

Doctor Francis, after the introduction I had given him, attached himself to Mr. Fox, but much more to his commis. For as lady Caroline's frequent indispositions prevented her from seeing much company, there was no table kept. And the Doctor being a *bon vivant*, and preferring a magnum bonum to his breviary, he fixed himself with a man with whom he was sure of enjoying good liv-

ing, and who had no objection to take a share of it. I must here remark that both these gentlemen afterwards repaid their patron with the blackest ingratitude.

But indeed that great and *good* man never received any other return from those he showered his favours upon. Mr. Fox's private character was truly amiable. He was one of the tenderest husbands; *too* indulgent a father; the best of masters; and the warmest and most attached of friends. He was blest with penetration, wit, learning, and every social virtue. But notwithstanding he possessed all these valuable endowments, he could not escape the shafts of calumny, nor the stings of ingratitude, from those serpents he fostered in his bosom.

I cannot here help taking notice of an instance, among many, of this worthy man's fondness for his son, who justly makes so conspicuous a figure in the political annals of the present times. The wall at the bottom of the lawn before Holland-house being to be taken down, and iron pallisades put up in its room, that the passengers on the road might have a better view of that fine antique building, it was necessary to make use of gunpowder to precipitate the work. Mr. Fox had promised master Charles that he should be present when the explosion took place. But finding the workmen had completed the fall of the wall without giving him
him

him notice, he ordered it to be rebuilt. And when it was thoroughly cemented, had it blown up again, in order to keep his word with his son. He at the same time recommended it to those about him, never, upon any account, to be guilty of a breach of promise to children, as by doing so they instilled into them an indifference with regard to the observance of their own promises, when they arrived at years of maturity.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R L I I I

Jan. 22, 17—.

MR. RICH had been advised to revive Lee's tragedy of "Alexander;" as the character of that hero would suit the powers, and show the person of Barry to singular advantage. The parts of the rival queens he judged would be likewise well filled by Mrs. Woffington and myself. The animosity this lady had long borne me had not experienced any decrease. On the contrary, my late additional finery in my jewels, &c. had augmented it to something very near hatred. I had during the summer given Madam Montête, wife of the hair dresser of the time, who was going to Paris, a commission to bring me from thence two tragedy dresses, the most elegant she could purchase. I have already observed that the
proprietor

proprietor allowed me a certain sum to find my own habiliments.

My *chargée d'affaire* opened her credentials at Madam Bonfoy's, principal *marchand du mode* in that metropolis. I had requested this lady to consult Brilliant, who would consult Du Menil. She was likewise to take the joint opinion of all the people of taste there, upon an affair of such momentous consequence. The revival of "Alexander," furnished me with an opportunity of showing all my elegance in the character of the Persian Princess.

My royal robes in which I had represented the Empress Fulvia, in Doctor Francis's "Constantine," to the great loss of the public, had not been seen by them. They were showy and proper for the character. But in these *robes de cours*, taste and elegance were never so happily blended. Particularly in one of them, the ground of which was a deep yellow. Mr. Rich had purchased a suit of her royal highness's the Princess Dowager of Wales for Mrs. Woffington to appear in Roxana. It was not in the least soiled, and looked very beautiful by day-light; but being a straw colour, it seemed to be a dirty white, by candle-light; especially when my splendid yellow was by it. To this yellow dress I had added a purple robe; and a mixture so happy, made it appear, if possible, to greater advantage.

Thus

Thus accoutred in all my magnificence, I made my *entrée* into the Green Room, as the Persian Princess. But how shall I describe the feelings of my inveterate rival! The sight of my pompous attire created more real envy in the heart of the actresses, than it was possible the real Roxana could feel for the loss of the Macedonian hero. As soon as she saw me, almost bursting with rage, she drew herself up, and thus, with a haughty air, addressed me, "I desire, Madam, you will never more, upon any account, wear those cloaths in the piece we perform to night."

You are too well acquainted with my disposition, and so I dare say are my readers by this time, to suppose this envious lady took the proper way to have her request granted.

I replied, "I know not, Madam, by what right you take upon you to dictate to me what I shall wear. And I assure you, Madam, you must ask it in a very different manner, before you obtain my compliance." She now found it necessary to solicit in a softer strain. And I readily gave my assent. The piece consequently went through, without any more murmuring on her part, whatever might be her sensations.

However, the next night I sported my other suit; which was much more splendid than the former. This rekindled Mrs. Woffington's rage, so that it nearly bordered on madness.

madness. When, oh! dire to tell! she drove me off the carpet, and gave me the *coup de grace* almost behind the scenes. The audience, who I believe preferred hearing my last dying speech, to seeing her beauty and fine attitude, could not avoid perceiving her violence, and testified their displeasure at it.

Though I despise revenge, I do not dislike retaliation. I therefore put on my yellow and purple once more. As soon as I appeared in the Green Room, her fury could not be kept within bounds; notwithstanding one of the *corps diplomatique* was then paying homage to her beauty, and, for the moment, made her imagine she had the power of controul equal to a real queen. She imperiously questioned me, how I dared to dress again, in the manner she had so strictly prohibited? The only return I made to this insolent interrogation, was by a smile of contempt. It was not long before I had my plenipo likewise; the never-failing Comte de Haslang; to whom I told the reason of my changing my attire, which was meant *par oblique* to her. Upon hearing which, she immediately sent for Mr. Rich; but that gentleman prudently declined attending her summons.

Being now ready to burst with the contending passions which agitated her bosom, she told me it was well for me that I had a *minister* to supply my extravagance with jewels

els and such parapharnelia. Struck with so unmerited and cruel a reproach, my asperity became more predominant than my good nature; and I replied, I was sorry that *even half the town* could not furnish a supply equal to the minister she so illiberally hinted at. Finding I had got myself into a disagreeable predicament, and recollecting the well-known distich, that

He who fights, and runs away,
May live to fight another day;

I made as quick an exit as possible, notwithstanding I wore the regalia of a Queen. But I was obliged in some measure to the Comte for my safety; as his Excellency covered my retreat, and stopped my enraged rival's pursuit: I should otherwise have stood a chance of appearing in the next scene with black eyes, instead of the blue ones which nature had given me.

The next season Mr. Foote profited by this behaviour of Mrs. Woffington; and produced a little piece, which he intitled, "The Green-Room Squabble; or, a Battle Royal between the Queen of Babylon and the Daughter of Darius." It may be supposed that after so public a rupture we never spoke. This taciturnity continued, till being upon her death-bed, some years after, she requested to see me. She then informed me, that she had once done me an intentional injury, by prevailing upon one of
her

her lovers to show Mr. Fox a letter of mine which had accidentally fallen into her hands, and the contents of which would admit of a different interpretation from what it was designed to convey. Her malicious intention had not, however, the desired effect, as that gentleman and myself were not upon the terms she suspected, or at least wished to have thought. I own I could not refrain from being much surprised at the wickedness and meanness of the intended injury. And though my humanity prompted me to forgive an offence which seemed to lie so heavy on her mind, I left the lady, as soon as possible, to reflect upon the illiberality of such a proceeding.

The play of the "Rival Queens" was very well supported by Barry's excellence in representing the Conqueror of the World. But the piece is composed of such bombastic language, that even Mrs. Woffington's beauty, and my fine robes, added to Barry's excellence, would not have been productive of much advantage, had not Mr. Rich displayed his genius in the triumphal entry of the hero into Babylon. This he did with such taste and magnificence, that it excelled every thing of the kind I ever saw. And though it was attended with very great expence, the return made ample amends. Here, indeed, he might with great justice have

have produced his snuff-box, and cried, "*It is my triumph.*"

At this period I met with a very severe loss in being deprived of the company of the two Miss Merediths; between whom and myself there had always subsisted the most cordial intimacy. The younger of them being judged by the physical gentlemen to be in a decline, she was ordered to the continent; and her sister attending her, they wished me to accompany them. But I had so much business upon my hands at this time, that my going was impracticable. For as I asked all the officers of my acquaintance, who were likely to have a regiment, to make me their agent, I was obliged to remain on the spot, to be ready to claim their promise as soon as they were preferred.

Since I had been united to Mr. Calcraft I had obtained the agency of Sir John Mor-daunt, and General Campbell (the late Duke of Argyle) exclusive of General Braddock's, already mentioned. I had further procured the promise of Colonel Honeywood (since General) who was upon the list for an English regiment. And I was as alert in endeavouring to acquire their agency, as Mr. Calcraft was in doing the requisite business when honoured with it.

As to my own affairs, they claimed little of my attention. I left the management of them, with regard to money matters, solely
to

to my Cook, whom I believed to be as honest in his principles as he was perfect in his profession. We had company to dinner and supper every day, which consequently was productive of an expence three times as large as what Mr. Calcraft *allowed* me. But as his affection seemed to experience no diminution, I did not harbour a doubt, but that as his business increased, an increase for which he was chiefly indebted to my assiduity, he would readily discharge any debts that should be contracted for the entertainment of those by whose company *his interest* was promoted.

Mr. Fox generally honoured us with his company at dinner, as Lady Caroline seldom left Holland-House. The late Lord Kildare being this winter in England, his Lordship generally attended Mr. Fox. The Marquis of Granby and General Hervey, were either at breakfast, dinner, or supper, and some days at all three. To entertain such guests required delicacies; and I piqued myself upon understanding a bill of fare as well as any *maitre d'hotel* in London.

My gentleman had purchased a place, which from the beauty of its situation was attracting, but it had its inconveniencies. It is called Hollwood-hill, and is situated near Bromley in Kent. As he was subject to the gout in his head, he was always talking of dying. And, indeed he had some reason to be apprehensive, as his mother died young
of

of the same disorder. During these fits he used to say that he intended this seat for my daughter and myself; upon which account I spared no expence to clean and beautify it. What made me the more partial to Hollwood was, that Lord Tyrawley had been once the owner of it.

Some years before Mr. Calcraft bought it, the house had been occupied by six gentlemen belonging to the Croydon hunt; as it lay adjacent to a wood consisting of several hundred acres, from whence the foxes were unearthed, and from which it takes its name. This induced those gentlemen to erect offices and stables to it worthy of a better house; for it was old, and built after the ancient manner in apartments. It not having been tenanted for four years, I found it required nearly as much cleansing as the Augean stable. For the house had as many inhabitants of the vermin kind, as the gardens and ponds, which were overrun with weeds, had of frogs, toads, and other reptiles.

This made the task, which I had undertaken to see performed myself, not only troublesome but expensive. However, a fortunate circumstance tended to accelerate it. There being in the cellar a great deal of curious wine, Doctor Francis, who, as I have before observed, loved his bottle, cheerfully afforded me his assistance to forward my Herculean labour. General Campbell sent me

a gardener, and supplied me with many shrubs and exoticks from Combe-bank. He likewise favoured me with his advice how to lay out the ground, which consisted only of eleven acres. In the garden I built a hot-house, a succession-house, a green-house, and an ice-house. And I completed the whole of this complicated undertaking within four months; that is to say, from the beginning of February to the latter end of May.

This seat is four miles from Bromley, which is the nearest market town to it. It is situated on an eminence, and commands an unlimited prospect. On one side you can see London at fifteen miles distance, and on the other you have a most extensive view of the adjacent country. The expedition with which I had rendered it completely habitable, excited the wonder of every one who heard of it, and obtained me their praises. Its situation so near town, however, made it an inn, without the usual advantage arising from carrying in a bill in the morning. And as I was never without two or three, or more female visitants, who were innocently cheerful, and witty without ill-nature, it must be supposed we did not want for the company of such of our male acquaintance as loved society, and wished to taste the Nepenthe that had procured me the Doctor's assistance.

The

The next year Mr. Calcraft took an adjacent farm, which was sufficient to maintain the house. But for the present, Dr. Betts supplied me. This clergyman lived at a village called Caston, about a mile from the wood; and, as he kept his tythes in his own hands, he was able to furnish me with poultry and other articles. Mr. Calcraft had presented me with six Alderney cows and a bull. And, as he had secretly joined Mr. Shaftoe in his stud, we had a number of attendants belonging to the stable, which was not a disagreeable circumstance in so lonely a place.

At the end of the summer, I found that I had expended six hundred pounds here, notwithstanding General Campbell had presented me with all my curious plants and shrubs.

G. A. B.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

